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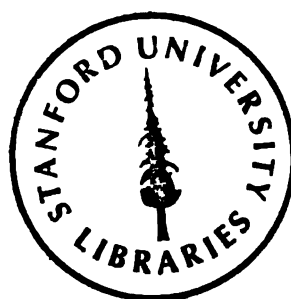
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**DUCHESS SARAH**









# DUCHESS SARAH

BEING THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF  
THE TIMES OF SARAH JENNINGS  
DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH  
WITH GLIMPSES OF HER LIFE & ANECDOTES  
OF HER CONTEMPORARIES IN THE SEVEN-  
TEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY

ONE OF HER DESCENDANTS

(MRS. ARTHUR COLVILLE), *elina*

WITH 10 PHOTOGRAVURE PLATES AND  
2 OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

SECOND IMPRESSION

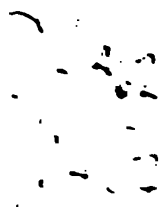
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39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY

1904

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THIS BOOK  
IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF  
MY DEAR FATHER  
LORD ALFRED SPENCER CHURCHILL  
(SECOND SON OF THE SIXTH DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH)  
WHO DIED SEPTEMBER 21, 1893



## INTRODUCTION

FOUR years ago a book, entitled "The Conduct of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, at the Court of Queen Anne," published in 1742, came into my hands, and suggested the following. I have attempted in these pages to throw a side-light on the social history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, only introducing politics where necessary to understand the sequence of events, or when intimately connected with the life of Sarah Jennings, Duchess of Marlborough, she being the central figure of the work. The thought that has encouraged me through many interruptions, disappointments, and my own want of literary experience, has been that another writer, though abler, might have less sympathy for Sarah's character than one of her own descendants. It may be thought that everything that could be said about this remarkable woman has already been written; certainly, there is hardly a book dealing with her times that has not made some allusion to or quoted some anecdote about her. Her life was so full of incident, and her character so complex that, without going deeper into her history than has been done hitherto, it is impossible to realise the force of character, energy, and talents she possessed; nor must her upbringing and surroundings be overlooked. The reader is therefore asked to follow Sarah step by step through the frivolities of Charles II.'s court, the troubled times under James II., the political and social intrigues under William and Mary, until our heroine reaches the proud

position of adviser to the sovereign; only to fall from this pinnacle, partly from her own pride, but more especially through the underhand dealings of a bed-chamber woman, placed by herself about Queen Anne. Up to a certain date personal records are scarce, but when Sarah became a power in the land, and after, there is no lack of material to choose from. The duchess has been greatly blamed for her arrogant temper; much has been made of her faults, but few writers have enlarged on her many excellent qualities, her real goodness of heart, or her opinions. To take a true view of character it is necessary to look below the surface, and to know intimately the person whom we judge. "Tout savoir c'est tout pardonner" has been truly said, while a hasty judgment is liable to err. My ambition has been to collect some of Sarah's sayings and doings, to picture the principal social events that happened during her life, and some of the persons with whom she came into contact, and to make the book readable, with what success I must leave others to judge, knowing well myself its many imperfections. Much is recorded that may appear trivial, but what would be so in everyday life need not be considered as such when one recollects that two hundred years have elapsed since the actors in the drama of our history lived their lives.

I am indebted to Mademoiselle Charton for valuable criticisms and encouragement, to Mr. Thomas Perry, F.C.S., for much information regarding the Jennings family, and I have to thank Mr. W. J. Hardy, F.S.A., for kindly introducing me to the Public Record Office, and also for other assistance.

OLIVIA COLVILLE.

*October 1903.*

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# DUCHESS SARAH

## CHAPTER I

### UNDER CHARLES II

(1660-1672)

*"When vice prevails and impious men bear sway,  
The post of honour is a private station."*

ON a bright morning in the summer of 1660, a child who was destined to sway the history of England, if not of Europe, first saw the light.

Sarah Jennings was born on the fifth day of June in the early days of the "Merry Monarch's" reign, just when a new epoch was about to commence. She was the youngest of seven children of Richard Jennings and Frances his wife, of Sandridge, in the county of Hertford.

There is no authentic record of the actual dwelling in which Sarah made her entry into the world ; tradition says it was in a small house in St. Albans, now destroyed, and this is borne out by the Duchess herself, who says St. Albans was her birthplace. The ancestral home of the Jennings family was Water End House (now a farm, also supposed to be the scene of Sarah's birth). Situated on the Sandridge estate, it was built by Sir John Jennings, our heroine's great-grandfather, who was knighted by James I. in 1603.

This property and that of Holywell on the other side of St. Albans had formerly belonged to a monastery,



and had been granted by Henry VIII. to Sir Ralph Rowlett, a goldsmith or banker of London. His daughter Joan married Ralph Jennings,<sup>1</sup> a man of property and means, owner of an estate in Surrey named Fanne. These properties, although greatly involved, descended to Sarah's father, Richard Jennings, who had succeeded his father, the second Sir John Jennings, in 1642. Sir John had been created a Knight of the Bath in 1625, at the coronation of Charles I. Two years before he died, Sir John became a Member of Parliament for St. Albans, and for this reason he had apartments at Whitehall, where Lady Jennings remained with her family after she became a widow.

A few years later, in 1650, there was an order in Council to command Richard Jennings to remove himself and family from Whitehall, as he was sheltering there against arrest from debt. The following year Richard married, and became a Member of Parliament for St. Albans, and as long as he retained his seat he was free from bailiffs' importunities. His wife Frances brought him a fortune inherited from her father, Sir Gifford Thornhurst, of Agnes Court, in Kent. This set him up for a time, but not for long, as shortly after Richard's marriage he and his brother Charles gave a bond for £20,000 to Sir Martin Lister, Lady Thornhurst's second husband; this sum paid off some of his liabilities. Two years later, however, being again in need of money, he sold his estate of Churchill, in Somersetshire, and obtained his mother's consent to part with her dower house at Puxton, in the same county.

The Stuarts had reason to be grateful to the Jennings family; not only had Sir John impoverished his estate by raising troops to fight for Charles I., but Richard

<sup>1</sup> For origin and pedigree of Jennings family see Appendix I.

had fought and been taken prisoner by the Round-heads, and in the Convention Parliament had voted for the Restoration.

These services to the royal cause would account for the introduction, first of Richard's eldest daughter Frances, and later of Sarah, his youngest, to the court of Charles II.; it was a cheap way of repaying the family. While Sarah is still an infant, let us glimpse at the court where in a few years she was to make her *début*.

At the time of Sarah's birth the second Charles had only been proclaimed king a month. He was not crowned until the following year. This was the first historical event that took place in our heroine's life, to be followed by many others when later she was old enough to appreciate and take part in them.

The coronation ceremonies lasted two days. Charles went to the Tower overnight to start early. Evelyn tells us that a magnificent cavalcade escorted him in state to Whitehall, passing through the City. The streets were strewn with flowers and brilliantly decorated, the windows and balconies being filled with well-dressed ladies and their attendant cavaliers; the populace shouted for joy, while music played, bells pealed, fountains flowed with wine, and bonfires were lighted everywhere. Such a pageant had not been seen for many a year.

The second day Charles went by water from Whitehall Palace to Westminster Abbey, where the coronation was to take place. The service took several hours, including as it did the acclaiming and anointing of the King, the actual ceremony of coronation, the presentation of the sword of Edward the Confessor, the gift of the ring with the cross of St. George, and the two sceptres, the one with the dove, the emblem of peace,

and the other with the globe, the emblem of dominion and power—these ceremonies being interspersed with prayers and hymns and a sermon. At the conclusion of the service the Archbishop of Canterbury pronounced the blessing, after which, while the *Te Deum* was being sung, the King ascended his throne to receive the homage of the peers; the archbishop and bishops bestowing on his Majesty the kiss of peace. Before divesting himself of his robes, the King received the Sacrament. The procession returned in the same order as on entry, the King walking to the west door of the abbey, with the crown still upon his head. A triumphal barge conveyed him back to Whitehall, where a great feast was prepared for all who had taken part on this auspicious occasion.

Among the peers who did homage to Charles was his brother James, Duke of York, who had accompanied him to England on the Restoration. During his exile, when on a visit to the Queen Dowager in Paris, James had met Anne Hyde, maid of honour to his sister the Princess of Orange. Anne's age was twenty-one, she had a shapely figure and a pleasing countenance, and was not deficient in wit or accomplishments. The Duke of York fell in love with her, and they were secretly married on November 24, 1659, but were soon parted, as James followed his brother to England. Anne's father, Edward Hyde, the great Lord Clarendon, had been Privy Councillor and Chancellor of the Exchequer to Charles I., but on the King's execution fled to France, where he joined Charles II.

On the Restoration, the Chancellor was reinstated in his former appointment, and established himself and family at Worcester House, in the Strand, which he entirely rebuilt and furnished with great magnificence. Anne's condition now made it imperative that the Duke

of York should openly declare his marriage. He therefore sought the King, confessed the union, and implored him to sanction it. Charles, considering James heir to the throne, was much astonished and disturbed at this intelligence, and, before giving him a definite reply, conferred with the Marquis of Ormonde and Earl of Southampton, whom he sent to inform the Chancellor of the event. Hyde's astonishment equalled his indignation, and notwithstanding the fact that the culprit was his own daughter, he advised that she should be sent to the Tower. The news spread rapidly, and caused a good deal of popular excitement. Charles, however, to show his regard for Clarendon, and his belief that he had no hand in the matter, presented him with £20,000 and created him a baron.

About this time Charles's sister, the Princess of Orange, arrived in this country, and shortly afterwards was followed by her mother, Henrietta Maria, who strongly objected to the Duke of York's marriage, and did everything she could to have it annulled. A plot was set on foot to undermine James's affection for his wife, and several men were found willing to swear away her good name, among others Dick Talbot, afterwards Lord Tyrconnel, and Sir Charles Berkeley. In consequence of these tales, James for a time wavered in his allegiance; but the King said at once it was a "wicked conspiracy set on foot by villains," and he did not believe a word of it.

The Princess of Orange, one of the principal movers in the scheme, fell sick of the small-pox at the end of December. On her death-bed she sent a message on the subject to the other schemers. Shocked by her death, Sir Charles Berkeley confessed to James that all their accusations were false, to the great relief of the Duke of York, who had real affection for his wife.

Charles now began to think of marriage, as his brother's *mésalliance* and religion were obstacles to his succession. There was, however, a difficulty in finding a suitable princess; a German one being suggested to Charles, he declared they were all "dull and foggy." It was then remembered that Charles I. had formerly proposed a marriage for his son with the Princess of Portugal, then a child. The Portuguese ambassador having presented the King with a pleasing portrait of this princess, who was still unwed, negotiations for her hand forthwith commenced.

Princess Catherine was to have brought a dowry of £500,000; but although this sum was amassed with difficulty by the Queen Regent, who sold her jewels to raise it, by the time the English ambassador, Lord Sandwich, arrived, the Queen of Portugal had to confess that she was unable to pay more than half the promised sum. War had broken out with Spain while negotiations were pending, and the money had been spent in equipping the army. She promised that an equivalent would be provided in sugar, spices, etc., which could be converted into money in England. With this the ambassador had to be content. Charles was somewhat disgusted when, instead of money, only sacks of merchandise were forthcoming with his bride.

Later, however, the Portuguese Minister, Duerta da Silva, paid in all £35,250. Catherine also brought as her dowry the island of Goa, the nucleus of our Indian Empire, but it was some time before this was ceded to Charles.

At first everything promised well for Catherine's happiness. Charles was delighted with his bride, who became devoted to him. He wrote to his brother-in-law on her arrival as follows:—



"PORTSMOUTH, 23rd May 1662.

"Your Majesty's of the 21st of last month has come to my hands. Having robbed you of the brightest jewel of your crown to adorn my own, I must employ all my powers in defence thereof, and so you will have gained a brother without losing a sister, who, although lost to your sight, will never lose you from her memory. We both pray that God may grant long life to your Majesty."<sup>1</sup>

Charles also sent a letter to the Queen of Portugal, who, in return, wrote that her daughter gave her news that she was quite happy with him. Unfortunately, the young queen's happiness was of short duration.

Queen Catherine of Braganza arrived at Hampton Court on the 29th of May, attended by a numerous suite of very plain Portuguese ladies, who were all dressed in monstrous farthingales or *guard-infantas*. "The young queen," said Lord Chesterfield, "was exactly shaped, had lovely hands, excellent eyes, a good countenance, a pleasing voice, fine hair; in a word, what an understanding man would wish for a wife." Moreover, it was remarked, "she painted well"—meaning her face—this being considered part of the necessary toilet of a great lady at that time. Evelyn, who was also among those to greet her, remarked that the Queen was rather good-looking; she had a small, well-shaped figure, fine eyes, and rather prominent teeth. He describes some of the bridal gifts; how the rich gondola, a present from the states of Venice to the King, although managed by Venetians, was not so swift as the common wherries. He tells us the states of Holland presented the Queen with a state bed of crimson velvet, richly embroidered with silver, which cost £8000. Catherine

<sup>1</sup> Egerton MSS., British Museum Historical Letters.

brought from Portugal some most superb Indian cabinets, the like of which had never before been seen; some of these may still be found in the royal palaces.

The court remained at Hampton Court until August, when it moved to Whitehall. The King and Queen "came by water in an antique-shaped open vessel, covered with a canopy of cloth of gold, made in the form of a cupola, supported with Corinthian pillars wreathed with flowers and festoons and garlands." They were accompanied by a large flotilla of boats and wherries, decorated with great magnificence, and were met by the Lord Mayor and City companies in stately barges, while guns were fired from the vessels, bells were rung, and music played to welcome Catherine on her first coming to the capital.

During Charles's many years of exile, with no business or responsibility to steady him, with the example of the refined but still immoral court of France to copy, it is not wonderful that a man of his temperament should have led a wild life, thinking only of the pleasures of the hour. The pity was that, when responsibility came, he could not detach himself from pleasures that had become part of his nature. Among his early intrigues, there was one which had a very serious effect upon his after life and that of his country and court—this was his meeting with a beautiful but profligate woman named Barbara Palmer. She was the daughter of William, second Viscount Grandison, who had lost his life in the Royal cause.

At an early age she married one Roger Palmer, a student of the Middle Temple. This gentleman had quarrelled with and killed another young student, and for fear of the consequences of his crime, fled with his wife to France. This was just about the time of Charles's preparations for his return to England. Palmer

first obtained the King's pardon, and then joined his court at Brussels, where Barbara was not long in obtaining influence over Charles, and the intrigue was continued on his restoration—this arrangement being acquiesced in by the obliging husband, who accepted a peerage, and was created Earl of Castlemaine. Before marriage, Barbara had had a lover in the person of Philip Stanhope, second Earl of Chesterfield, who was a fascinating but unprincipled man.

Charles's intrigue was known to Catherine before she left Portugal; her mother had told her never to allow Lady Castlemaine's name to be uttered in her proximity. Shortly after her marriage the King gave the Queen a list of the ladies of her household, at the head of which was Lady Castlemaine's name. Catherine struck it out, and assured her husband she would sooner return to Portugal than tolerate such an outrage. Charles was, however, determined to break his wife's spirit, for he had no intention of giving up Lady Castlemaine. One day he presented her to the Queen before the whole court. Catherine did not at first realise who the lady was, but one of the Portuguese attendants whispered the information. The poor young queen was completely overcome; in her efforts to control her emotion her nose bled, and she fell back insensible into the arms of her ladies. The King was not a bit softened, but only exasperated, and continued to insist that Lady Castlemaine should be included among the ladies of the Queen's bedchamber. In vain did he storm; Catherine would not consent, and begged to be allowed to return to her own country.

Lord Clarendon was commissioned to remonstrate with her, but without avail, until the last expedient of dismissing her Portuguese attendants was resorted to. He mentions how Lady Castlemaine was brought daily



into the Queen's presence ; how Catherine sat unnoticed in a corner, and if she retired to her own apartments, few followed, and there was universal mirth except in her company. After a time, in order to regain her husband's love, Catherine became on familiar terms with Lady Castlemaine. The iron must have indeed entered her soul before she could go so far against her nature. She always remained a devout and virtuous woman.

Pepys, delightful old gossip, notwithstanding his Puritan upbringing, seems to have held Lady Castlemaine in great admiration at a respectful distance. On one occasion he and his wife were walking in Whitehall Gardens and, looking into the Privy Garden, saw "the finest smocks and linen petticoats of my Lady Castlemaine laced with rich lace at the bottom that ever I saw, and did me good to look at them!" Another time he visited Somerset House, where the Queen mother, Henrietta Maria, was staying ; there he also saw the young queen and Madame Castlemaine and the King's son by Lucy Walters, James Crofts, who was afterwards created Duke of Monmouth. Pepys admired the young queen for a "good and innocent look, but it pleased him more to look on Lady Castlemaine."

One day he saw Queen Catherine going to chapel in St. James's Park and followed her in. He was not much taken with the music, but says, "What pleased me best was to see my dear Lady Castlemaine, who, though Protestant, did wait upon the Queen to Chapel!" Later he saw Lady Castlemaine's portrait at Lely's, and thought it "the most blessed picture, that I must have a copy."

However, notwithstanding Pepys' admiration for the lady, he did not approve of the King so constantly visiting her and thereby neglecting state affairs, and

was very indignant that all the King's Christmas presents from the peers had been given her; also he remarked she had more jewels than the Queen and Duchess of York together.

The Queen was much blamed for being so meek and gentle under the indignities she received. She, however, occasionally mildly asserted herself. One day, finding the Queen had been long in her dressers' hands, Lady Castlemaine said, "I wonder your Majesty can have the patience to sit so long a-dressing?" "I have so much reason to use patience," answered the poor queen, "that I can very well bear with it." Shortly after this, Lady Castlemaine left the court, and, it was conjectured, at the Queen's command. However, if this was the case, her banishment did not last long, for when Catherine fell ill of a fever, the King, although he tended her with great concern, still continued every evening to sup with Lady Castlemaine.

Hopes had frequently been raised that the Queen would present the King with an heir; these hopes, however, were never fulfilled. No doubt her barrenness preyed upon her mind, for in her delirium she imagined she had several children, and used to ask Charles after their health; he humoured her in this delusion. A few years later, in 1669, Sir J. Clayton wrote on June 8th to Sir R. Paxton, "I suppose the news of the Queen's miscarriage is stale with you, for it was last Friday, being affrighted by an unfortunate accident with one of the King's tame foxes, which stealing after the King unknown, into the bedchamber, lay there all night, and in the morning very early leaped upon the bed and ran over the Queen and into the bed."<sup>1</sup> At one time it was represented to Charles that he should divorce the

Queen and marry again, but this he would not do, thereby showing some little regard for his young wife.

A member of Catherine's household, Edward Montague, Master of the Horse, felt pity for the Queen's forlorn condition and fell in love with her. He had no way of showing his affection except by squeezing her hand when he led her to the coach. The Queen, who was very simple-minded and did not understand English etiquette, inquired of the King, "What do you English mean when you squeeze a lady by the hand?" Charles promised to tell her, if she would first inform him who had occasioned this question; so without intending it Catherine was the innocent cause of Mr. Montague's dismissal. Feeling miserable, he took service abroad, and was mortally wounded off Bergen, in Norway, in a naval engagement with the Dutch. In his dying agony he wrote a letter to the Queen with his blood, which greatly afflicted her; she forthwith gave the vacant post to his brother Ralph, who afterwards became Duke of Montague.

Early in the year 1663 Charles began to show attention to one of the maids of honour, Miss Stuart, granddaughter of Lord Blantyre. Pepys thought her a great beauty, and describes her as dressed in a cocked hat with a red plume, "with her sweet eye, little Roman nose, and excellent taille." The King fell so deeply in love with her that he openly slighted the Queen and neglected Lady Castlemaine. He used to take Miss Stuart into corners and kiss her before all the court. Charles had a fine chariot, new to England, given him by De Grammont. Lady Castlemaine and Miss Stuart had a desperate quarrel as to who should be the first to appear in it in the Park, and both overwhelmed the King with threats of dire vengeance if he favoured the other. Miss Stuart won the

day. She rode well and with peculiar grace, a great attraction in the eyes of the King. A beautiful little horse was given her by an admirer, Hamilton, who was however warned that this admiration would lead to trouble, and as his fortune depended on Charles's favour, he turned his attentions to Frances Jennings, whom he afterwards married. Philip Rotier, the celebrated medallist, who came over to England to cut the die for the new coinage, took Miss Stuart for a model for the head of Britannia, and became so passionately in love with her that he nearly lost his reason. This young lady appears to have been a very heartless flirt, and to have gone as near losing her reputation as she could well go. She finally determined to marry the Duke of Richmond, a man a good deal older than herself. Lady Castlemaine, through the information of paid spies, discovered that Miss Stuart had made an appointment one evening with the duke, and immediately informed the King, hoping to get her rival into trouble. Charles, taken by surprise and furious at the intelligence, rushed to Miss Stuart's apartments, and pushing past the servants who attempted to dissuade him from entering, found the fair one reclining on a couch and the Duke of Richmond sitting beside her. With a profound bow, the duke escaped out of the room, being afraid the King in his fury might thrust him out of the window overlooking the Thames, and left his companion to face the situation. Miss Stuart upbraided the King, and insisted on her right to receive the duke when and where she pleased. Charles left her in anger. The next day the duke was commanded to leave the court, but he had already anticipated the order.

Miss Stuart threw herself at the Queen's feet and implored her to intercede with the King. Accordingly the good-natured Catherine, preferring Miss Stuart's

gentleness to the arrogance of Lady Castlemaine, brought about a reconciliation with his Majesty.<sup>1</sup>

One cold, dark night in March, however, the maid of honour stole away from Whitehall and joined the Duke of Richmond at a tavern in Westminster, and eloped with him into Surrey, where they were married by the duke's chaplain.

The King was greatly incensed at her flight, and, it is said, attributed it to the influence of Lord Cornbury, Lord Clarendon's eldest son, whom he happened to meet near the delinquent's lodgings on the evening of her flight. Charles accordingly resolved to take the Seals from his father, thus getting rid of one of his best and wisest counsellors. Lady Castlemaine was also supposed to be the direct cause of Lord Clarendon's disgrace and banishment from court. He had refused to sanction some appointment she had made, remarking, "The woman will sell everything shortly." Lady Castlemaine heard of this, sent for him, and said, "I have disposed of this place and have, no doubt, in a little time to dispose of yours." She was not slow in fulfilling her promise. Lady Castlemaine also quarrelled with the Duke of Ormonde; this was on the subject of her expenditure. She told him she hoped to see him hanged, to which his Grace replied with grave good-humour, "Far from wishing her ladyship's days shortened in return, his greatest desire was to see her grow old." Lady Castlemaine had a grant of £5000 a year out of the Post-Office and £20,000 a year out of the Customs, and this was at a time when Charles's servants had scarcely enough to eat, and he himself "wanted linen and was stinted in notepaper." She scandalised every one, including the King, with the number of her lovers, so at last Charles took courage and remonstrated with

<sup>1</sup> Jameson's "Beauties of the Court of Charles II."



her, and on condition of her promising to retire from court he raised her to the rank of duchess, when she took the name of Cleveland.

The following year the new Duchess of Richmond was appointed one of the ladies of the bedchamber and lodged at Somerset House, where Queen Catherine was then residing. Pepys says, "The apartments allotted to her and the duke were sumptuous, the King frequently visited her, but merely in courtesy." Others say that she was more complaisant after marriage, and that the King in his cups boasted of her favours. Twelve months later the Duchess of Richmond was attacked with small-pox, a malady that impaired her matchless beauty and nearly destroyed one of her lovely eyes. Charles was very attentive to her during her illness, which speaks for his kindness of heart.

Among the favourite amusements at court were "Blind Man's Buff" and "Hunt the Slipper." Pepys mentions that he found the Duke and Duchess of York and all the great ladies seated upon the carpeted floor playing "I love my love with an A because he is so and so, and I hate him with an A because he is this and that." He thought the duchess and Lady Castlemaine very witty. He also describes a ball at which the King led the Duchess of York in the *Bransle*, a sort of minuet, the Duke of York following with the Duchess of Buckingham, the Duke of Monmouth with Lady Castlemaine, and so on. The King, who danced very well, much better than his brother, led a lady also in a single *Coranto*. The custom was that while the King danced all the ladies in the room, including the Queen, stood up. After this, various country-dances followed.

At another court ball Pepys says: "It was a glorious sight to see Miss Stuart dressed in black and white lace,

her head and shoulders dressed with diamonds." The King, wearing a vest of rich silk with silver trimming, led the Queen, who wore no jewels, in the *Bransle*; while fourteen other couples took part in the dance.

At the court ball one Valentine's day, the dancers changed their dresses several times, music being played during the interval. On this occasion the Duchess of Cleveland appeared in a brocaded petticoat, a short coat over a shirt like a man's, while a periwig, cravat, and three-cornered hat finished her costume, which was very becoming. Some of the handsome skirts then worn were richly trimmed with several rows of valuable lace, often costing the wearers fifty or sixty pounds apiece.

There were less refined amusements than dancing. Ladies as well as gentlemen went to see exhibitions of cock-fighting and bull and bear baiting, which were frequently held. The Queen was sometimes induced to join in pleasure parties. On one occasion she was deserted by her hired chairmen, who were unaware of her rank; being ignorant of the way and unable to speak fluent English, she was glad to return home in a cart! Another time Catherine, accompanied by the Duchess of Richmond and the Duchess of Buckingham disguised as country lasses, in red petticoats and waistcoats, went to see the fair at Audley End.<sup>1</sup> Each lady was mounted on a farm horse behind a cavalier. They had, however, overdone their disguise, so were stared at by every one. "The Queen went to a booth to buy a pair of yellow stockings for her sweetheart, and Sir Bernard Gascoign asked for a pair of gloves stitched with blue for his sweetheart, but they were discovered by their language to be strangers." Some one found out that one of the party was the Queen, upon which the whole fair crowded round to look. The ladies and their

<sup>1</sup> I've's Select Papers, quoted in "Chronicles of Fashion."

escort were glad to escape to their horses, and make for Whitehall, pursued by a number of farmers and their families, who followed to the very gates of the palace.

There was an interruption to the court gaieties when, in the summer of 1665, the plague began to devastate London. The court and nearly all the well-to-do fled the capital. Terrible were the scenes witnessed by the few brave ones who remained to combat the dread disease, amongst whom was Evelyn. Whole families were killed off, and in one week alone 6978 persons were reported to have died of the plague.

London had only begun to recover from this terrible calamity when it was followed by another. In September 1666 a great fire broke out; it began at 3 A.M. in the King's baker's house in Pudding Lane, where the monument now stands, and spread with alarming rapidity, the warehouses along the river bank being filled with inflammable materials. Pepys describes the scene; how every one tried to save his household goods, some removing them to the country in waggons, others causing them to be piled up in wherries and sent down the river, only to find when removed they were in greater danger than before. A pathetic sight to watch the poor pigeons, hovering about windows and balconies, loth to leave their homes, until at last their wings were burnt, and falling they were consumed in the general conflagration.

The furniture at Whitehall was removed, fortunately without occasion, as on the fourth day, after several houses had been blown up, the fire was got under. The Old Bailey, Fleet Street, St. Paul's, and all Cheapside were burnt to the ground; among other things destroyed were a number of valuable books belonging to St. Paul's school.



The old cathedral of St. Paul's far exceeded in size the one that was afterwards built; it was a Norman building of vast extent and great beauty. It had a "nave of twelve bays, its glorious thirteenth-century choir another twelve, making with the crossing the unrivalled vista of twenty-five bays from west door to far east window, its transepts of five bays each, so that the whole transept from north to south was itself as large as many a cathedral."<sup>1</sup> There was also a huge central tower and spire. Gunpowder was employed to bring down the enormous piers, while a battering-ram felled the walls in order to stop the ravages of the fire. Although this great fire rendered many families homeless, and destroyed a great part of picturesque old London, it had beneficial effects, for in the new town, built on the ruins of the old, streets were widened and buildings much improved.

Charles and his brother, the Duke of York, were indefatigable in their efforts to put out the fire. Nothing had roused the King so much from his selfish pleasures as this calamity. Unfortunately, directly all danger was over, he returned to his accustomed mode of life.

When Parliament met he asked for money. One million eight hundred thousand pounds was voted by the Commons, but only on certain conditions. One, that the law against Catholics should be enforced, as they were suspected of having fired the capital; another, that the public accounts should be audited and examined by a Parliamentary Commission. This last clause was suggested by the Duke of Buckingham, who, having quarrelled with Lady Castlemaine, supported the bill, in order to expose her peculations. The whole court was in great alarm, and the King so angry that he would have imprisoned his former favourite had he not

<sup>1</sup> "Pictorial Architecture of the British Isles," by Rev. H. H. Bishop, M.A.

hastily escaped. It was well known that not only Lady Castlemaine but many others had helped themselves to the public revenues with the King's help. Charles and Lord Clarendon managed to appoint their own Commission of Inquiry, so the affair came to nothing.

The majority of the House of Commons had felt so thankful at the restoration of the House of Stuart, that no restrictions on the King had been thought of. When he came to the throne his power had been strengthened by a large grant of money, and at his wish the army was disbanded.

The political history of Charles's reign is a record of misgovernment, corruption, and bloodshed, while the social history is one of debauchery; but still the man himself was made for better things; he was capable and kind-hearted, and if he could have had a guiding principle through life would have made a good king.

Although in some ways following the example of Louis XIV., Charles had not that monarch's dignity. Louis never forgot what was due to his queen, nor would allow the least familiarity to himself. Charles totally failed to inspire respect in his subjects. One water excursion, Nell Gwynne had provided angling rods with silk lines and hooks of gold. The King fished like the rest, but caught nothing. The ladies so ridiculed him that he declared he would fish no longer, and pulling up his line, found half-a-dozen fried smelts tied to the hook with a silken thread! Every one laughed, and Nelly said, "So great a king ought to have something above the rest; even poor fishermen catch fish alive, it was proper that the King's should be ready dressed!" Nell Gwynne was an excellent and bewitching comedian; she had been on the stage about a year when Charles first met her in January 1668. Nell was one of the first

actresses, as before the Restoration no woman had appeared upon the stage.

In one play, Dryden's "The Conquest of Granada," Nell appeared in a becoming wide-brimmed hat, almost as large as a cart-wheel, and especially delighted the King. She occupied a house, No. 79 Pall Mall, the back of which looked into St. James's Park. Evelyn mentions, when walking one day with his Majesty, he overheard a "very familiar discourse" between Charles and Nell Gwynne. "She was looking," he says, "out of her garden, on a terrace at the top of the wall," while the King stood on the green walk beneath.

Nell had also a house close to Windsor Castle, and another at Chelsea. Charles's frequent visits there gave the name to the King's Road. Although of vulgar manners and birth, she appears to have possessed an amiable character. It was through her instigation that Charles erected Chelsea Hospital for disabled soldiers, nor did she forget her former friends in the days of her prosperity. Nell had more than one lover before she met Charles, but afterwards remained faithful to him. Her great ambition was, that her two sons by the King should be raised to the peerage. Charles promised to ennoble the eldest, born in 1670, but always postponed doing so. One day he found her playing with her little son, who had just begun to walk, and was in danger of falling; she purposely called out, "Come here, you little bastard." The King, shocked at this epithet, begged her not to give the child such a name. "I am sorry," said she, "but I have no other to give him."<sup>1</sup> Shortly afterwards Charles created him Baron of Heddington and Earl of Burford, and some years later, at the age of ten, Duke of St. Albans. Her other son, James Beauclerk,

<sup>1</sup> "Beauties of the Court of Charles II."

died as a child in France. Nell retired from the stage in 1671, and died in 1691.

Another actress of whom Charles became enamoured was Mary, or Moll, Davis, supposed daughter of the Earl of Berkshire. She had a child by the King called Mary Tudor, who married Francis Radclyffe, Earl of Derwentwater, and whose son was the unfortunate Derwentwater executed for taking part in the Scottish rebellion of 1715.

A proposal made in Parliament to lay a tax on play-houses was opposed by the courtiers, one of whom observed that the players were the King's servants, and contributed to his diversion. Sir John Coventry then asked "whether his Majesty's pleasure lay among the male or female players?" The Duke of Monmouth, enraged at this familiar way of talking of the King, determined to take revenge. While returning to his lodgings that evening, Sir John was set upon by several men. Making a brave resistance, he wounded some of them, but was eventually overpowered, and his nose slit with a knife, "to teach him," they said, "to treat his Majesty with more respect in future."<sup>1</sup>

The Duke of York was as profligate as the King; he daily visited his mistress, Lady Denham, wife of Sir John Denham, at her house in Scotland Yard, accompanied by a gentleman-in-waiting, and this at the express wish of the lady herself, who declared, "She will not be his mistress as Mrs. Price, to go up and down the Privy stairs, but will be owned publicly; and so she is."<sup>2</sup> Lady Denham died young, and it was suspected she had been poisoned by the husband whom she had dishonoured.

Frances Jennings, one of the Duchess of York's lovely maids of honour, also came in for her share of the

<sup>1</sup> Barnard's "Complete History of England."

<sup>2</sup> "Chronicles of Fashion," Mrs. Stone.

duke's admiration, but his attempts to make love to her signally failed. "She would not meet his ardent gaze, nor listen to his words; and when he tried the eloquence of the pen, by writing little billets containing tender expressions and wondrous promises, which he slipped into her pocket or muff, she appeared totally unconcerned, and those who saw them slipped in would likewise see them fall out, unperused and unopened; she only shook her muff or pulled out her handkerchief as soon as his back was turned, and whoever pleased might pick them up."<sup>1</sup>

Charles, never backward in such matters, tried to succeed where his brother had failed, but luckily Miss Stuart interfered and drew him back to be her willing slave. Count Hamilton describes Frances Jennings as having the fairest and brightest complexion that ever was seen, her hair a beauteous flaxen, and something particularly lively and animated in her countenance; the contour of her face was exquisitely fine, and her swelling neck as fair and bright as her face. He likens her to Aurora or the goddess of Spring.

Notwithstanding her escapades and many temptations, Frances kept her virtue, which is more than could be said of the majority of the maids of honour, who might well have been named "maids of dishonour," so notorious were they for their frailty.

Another lady at court whom the Duke of York took a fancy to was Lady Carnegie, wife of the eldest son of Lord Southesk, a friend and confidante of Lady Castlemaine.<sup>2</sup> During her husband's absence in Scotland to attend his father's funeral, Lady Southesk, as she had now become, added the Duke of York to the number of her admirers. The duke, for the sake of appearance,

<sup>1</sup> "Beauties of the Court of Charles II."

<sup>2</sup> "Royalty Restored," by Fitzgerald Molloy.



only visited her when attended by some gentleman of his suite. One day her husband returned unexpectedly. Owing to long absence abroad, Dick Talbot, James's loyal but scatter-brained friend, who had been left in the antechamber as sentinel, not realising that Lady Southesk was the wife of the man he had known as Lord Carnegie, ran to meet him, and shaking him warmly by the hand, advised him to go and seek amusement elsewhere, as the Duke of York was then visiting her, and he had been stationed there to prevent intruders. Southesk was so astounded at the blunder of his unlucky friend, that he suffered himself to be turned out of his own house, not having the courage to face the heir presumptive. Notwithstanding that the story got about, Lady Southesk continued to frequent the court; she, however, deteriorated fast, failing to conceal by art the ravages dissipation had made in her beauty.

The Duke of York's mistresses better known as such are Arabella Churchill, his first, and Catherine Sedley, among his last.

Carried away by the general frivolity, Frances Jennings and Miss Price, another maid of honour, took part in the following escapade.<sup>1</sup> They dressed themselves up as orange girls, with the intention of visiting a famous conjurer at Charing Cross.<sup>2</sup> This pretended conjurer, whose skill was astonishing London, was the witty and licentious Earl of Rochester, a friend and boon companion of the King. The young ladies provided themselves with oranges, crossed the Park on foot from St. James's Palace, and took a hackney coach at Whitehall to drive to the theatre, where they knew the Duchess of York would be found in the royal box. They had not reckoned on the fact that orange girls did not bear a good

<sup>1</sup> "Beauties of the Court of Charles II."

<sup>2</sup> "Chronicles of Fashion."

reputation. At the entrance to the theatre they encountered "the handsome Sydney," about to pay his court to the Duchess of York, but he was preoccupied and paid no attention to them. They next met with Killigrew, to whom Miss Jennings offered her "fine oranges," and the foolish girl was horrified when, turning to Miss Price, he said, "Not now, but if you will bring this young girl to my lodgings to-morrow, I will make it worth to you all the oranges in London," and he showed his admiration for her so openly, and in so rude a manner, that they both hurried away, covered with confusion.

Entering another coach they proceeded to within a few doors of the fortune-teller's, and were about to descend from the carriage, when they were greatly alarmed at perceiving a notorious libertine, one Brouncker. The novel sight of seeing two orange girls in a hackney coach attracted his attention. His astonishment was further increased when a pretty foot and ankle, attired in shoes and stockings out of keeping with the character, emerged from the vehicle. He drew Miss Price aside, and, offering her his purse, made very much the same proposals that Killigrew had done. Having obtained a view of their faces, which all the time they had been endeavouring to conceal, he recognised them both, and put the worst construction on their conduct, believing an assignation on the part of the chaste Miss Jennings at the bottom of the escapade, and delighted at the prospect of retailing the scandal, he took his departure. In the meantime a crowd of ruffians had surrounded the coach, and made for the oranges. The coachman did his best to defend the property of his "fare," and a free fight was the result. Gladly relinquishing the fruit, the two maids of honour re-entered their coach, and, very much crest-fallen, returned to St. James's.

Miss Price possessed more wit than beauty, and was

not bashful; she took great interest in other people's love affairs, and also liked one of her own. Her inclination to pry into the secrets of others led her to discover some low intrigues of Lord Rochester's, which she published to the world. Later, Lord Rochester, in his capacity of astrologer, took his revenge, for, when Miss Price's maid consulted him, he told her she served a good-natured lady, whose only fault was loving wine and men! The maid was so struck with the remark that she repeated it to her mistress, and the reputation of the Wizard increased.

This Lord Rochester, known as Wilmot, must not be confused with Laurence Hyde, James the Second's brother-in-law, in whom the title was subsequently revived. Wilmot, after a very wild life, repented on his deathbed, a state of mind brought about by the good offices of Bishop Burnet of pious memory. Lord Rochester died without issue at the High Lodge in Woodstock Park in 1680.

Miss Price was not long a maid of honour. One of her lovers having died, a casket containing all her letters to him came to light. Anne Hyde, having unluckily and unintentionally read one or two aloud, found herself obliged to dismiss her maid of honour for the sake of example. No correspondence was held sacred in those days or for many years to come.

None of Frances Jennings' numerous admirers thought the worse of her for her frolics. Richard Talbot, afterwards Earl and Duke of Tyrconnel, was anxious to marry her, but Frances was indifferent to him. She had set her affections upon Henry Jermyn, a dandy known as *le petit Jermyn*, son of Henry Jermyn, Master of the Horse to the Duke of York; his intentions were not thought to be honourable, so it was as well for Frances that he fell ill. Talbot now saw a favourable opportu-



nity to press his suit, but one day, when about to commence his tender appeal, their interview was interrupted by Miss Temple, who brought a paper for Miss Jennings' perusal. Count Hamilton says, "The paper Miss Temple held in her hand was a poetical epistle which Lord Rochester had written some time before upon the intrigues of the two courts. In this, speaking of Miss Jennings, he said that Talbot had struck terror among the people of Gad by his gigantic stature, but that Jermyn, like a little David, had vanquished the great Goliath. Frances, delighted with this allusion, read it over two or three times, thinking it more entertaining than Talbot's conversation, and at first laughed heartily at it; but soon after, assuming a tender air, 'Poor little David,' she said, with a deep sigh, and turning her face on one side during this short reverie she shed a few tears, which assuredly did not flow for the defeat of the giant. Talbot, stung to the quick and seeing himself so ridiculously deceived in his hopes, quitted the room abruptly, vowing never to think any more of a giddy girl, in whose conduct there was no rhyme nor reason; but he did not keep his resolution."

Finding her virtue impregnable, on his recovery Jermyn's devotion to Frances cooled off, and his conduct opened Miss Jennings' eyes; so, when he arrived, expecting sympathy, she received him with raillery and affected indifference. He came to announce his intention of taking part in an expedition to Guinea. "He had already," she said, "made captives of so many that he did right to go in search of fresh laurels and foreign conquests. She only trusted that he would bring back from Africa the foreign ladies whom he would enslave, in order to supply the places of those his absence would bring to the grave." Jermyn was much piqued at being so received; he had hoped to encounter tears and re-

proaches, but in this his vanity sustained a rebuff. Frances civilly wished him farewell, plainly telling him that this visit was the last she expected. He did not, however, leave England. Miss Jennings afterwards married Sir George Hamilton, styled by Evelyn "a valiant and worthy gentleman"; he was a grandson of James, first Earl of Abercorn, and a younger son without fortune. He did not live long after his marriage, and left his widow with three daughters, who became celebrated as the "three Viscountesses." They were all beautiful and distinguished. Elizabeth married Viscount Ross; Frances, Viscount Dillon; Mary's husband was Nicholas, Viscount Kingsland.

Shortly after her husband's death, Lady Hamilton accidentally met in France her former admirer, Talbot, now the widower of a maid of honour, who had been known as "the languishing Boynton." Talbot renewed his offer of marriage, and in 1679 Lady Hamilton became his wife.

Her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Hamilton, had married the famous Count de Grammont. She was a very beautiful, virtuous woman, and had been brought up in France, where her father, also a Sir George Hamilton, spent many years of exile. Twenty years after marriage the Count de Grammont describes the beauty, grace, and delicacy of his wife with great tenderness. "She had the finest neck and loveliest hand and arm in the world, her forehead was fair and open, her hair dark and luxuriant, and arranged with great taste and picturesque simplicity, her complexion owed nothing to art, eyes not large but full of expression, her mouth charming, and the contour of her face perfect. Her nature was as faultless as her body was fair. She had great dignity and reserve, said little but that to the purpose, and at the same time was full of humour and ready wit."

It is recorded that when young she carried her love of fun to some length. Queen Catherine, to please her husband, gave a masked ball, in which the guests were each to represent different nations; on the card of invitation the costume was indicated, and the name of the gentleman or lady who were to be considered partners for the evening. The King assigned the Chevalier de Grammont to the charming Miss Hamilton. She had a cousin, a Lady Muskerrey, who was very ridiculous, extremely vain, and always putting her husband into trepidation as to what she would do next.<sup>1</sup> Lady Muskerrey was proud of her dancing, but as one leg was shorter than the other, that accomplishment was not all grace and charm. So anxious was Lord Muskerrey that his wife should not appear at the ball that he contrived she should not receive an invitation. Lady Muskerrey was in despair; she made her cousin the confidante of her hopes and fears, and Miss Hamilton, in the real spirit of mischief, imitated her own card of invitation and sent it to Lady Muskerrey with an apology for the mistake that had caused the delay, and a command from the Queen to appear *en Babylonienne*. Lady Muskerrey was delighted, and set to work to clothe herself in character, asking Miss Hamilton to assist.

On the night of the ball, when all were assembled, the Chevalier de Grammont inquired of the King who was the *Goblin en Masque* whom he had encountered on entering. He described her appearance as most fantastic. "She is enveloped," he said, "in at least sixty yards of silver gauze, and carries a pyramid like that of Cheops on her head *garnie de cent mille brimborions!*" He also explained that she had seized upon him as the cavalier who was to lead her in the dance, but he had escaped.

The Queen appeared most astonished on hearing this

<sup>1</sup> "Beauties of the Court of Charles II."



account, while all looked at one another and wondered who the lady could be. "Odds fish!" exclaimed the King, laughing, "I have it! It is some new extravagance of that crack-brained Duchess of Newcastle!" and he gave orders she should be introduced immediately. Miss Hamilton now became alarmed, and was afraid the joke had gone too far, for she had never expected Lord Muskerry would have allowed her cousin to appear. Lady Muskerry had, however, circumvented her husband. Miss Hamilton was greatly relieved when Lord Muskerry whispered to her, "Now I, for my part, would lay a wager that it is no other than my own fantastic fool of a wife." He immediately volunteered to conduct the guest, and found her seated in her coach raving against her faithless cavalier. He took her home by main force, locked her up in her own room, and placed a sentinel at the door. So Miss Hamilton's trick remained undiscovered.

The Duchess of Newcastle mentioned by Charles was a veritable blue stocking. She had a passion for writing poetry and philosophy, but never revised any of her writings. It is said she surrounded herself with young ladies to whom she dictated her compositions. Some were required to sleep in an adjoining room, that they might be ready at any hour of the night to take down her ideas. De Grammont succeeded in gaining Miss Hamilton's affections, where many had failed; they were married in 1668, and about a year later went to live in France. Madame de Grammont was appointed *Dame du Palais* at Versailles. Her husband, with all his charm, was not a worthy partner of his attractive wife. It is said he was frivolous, inconstant, and selfish, and hardly ever spoke a serious word in his life. In appearance he had laughing eyes, good features, a dimple in his chin, and a fine figure. He had also *l'esprit galant et delicat*, and was generous to prodigality.

Having spent so many years of exile in England, his sympathies and tastes were English. De Grammont's great friend and fellow-exile was St. Evremond. This graceful writer's sword and pen had been employed in the French king's service ; he had unfortunately offended Louis XIV. by some of his writings, and was accordingly banished in 1661, and for twenty-eight years remained in England. His contemporary, Milton, was a very different stamp of writer. His "Paradise Lost" appeared in 1667, while four years later "Paradise Regained" was published. Somehow these two noble works seem hardly to belong to the time of Charles II. Milton was, however, a remnant of the grand old Puritans whose influence has helped to build up the character of Englishmen, and shows itself in whatever clime they may be found. The sturdy independence, strictness to duty, and rectitude of conduct survived, while the bigotry, intolerance, and hypocrisy of the old Covenanters gradually disappeared. The possibility of such works appearing at such a time suggests the reflection, that in the most depraved society there is always some germ of good.

Louis XIV., in order to detach Charles from the Triple Alliance signed at the Hague in 1668, in which the Powers had entered into a secret agreement to check his ambition, determined to employ the Duchess of Orleans, whose sympathies were French, on a mission to her favourite brother.

Henrietta arrived at Dover in 1670, where she was met by Charles and his court. High revelry was kept there for ten days, during which time Henrietta managed her mission successfully. She promised on the part of the French king material aid and protection, and likewise a subsidy of a million a year, if Charles would help Louis against the Dutch. Charles could not resist



*King Charles II.  
From the original painting by M<sup>r</sup>. Mary Beale  
in the National Portrait Gallery.*





this, money he was always in need of; he therefore undertook what was required of him.

Knowing Charles to be weak and easily led by female influence, Louis sent in Henrietta's train Louise Renée de Penencourt de la Quérouaille. Louise, although only fifteen, was an attractive and clever woman, and had been well instructed in the part she had to play. Nothing loth, she captivated the English king, and on her departure with the Duchess of Orleans promised to return and become Charles's acknowledged mistress, an honourable post according to the French code of morals at that time.

Charles was encouraged in this passion by Buckingham, who was glad to revenge himself on Lady Castlemaine, now Duchess of Cleveland. Accordingly, when it suited Mdle. de Quérouaille to quit France, a yacht was sent to Dieppe to fetch her.<sup>1</sup> She was appointed maid of honour to the Queen, and given apartments at Whitehall. These were more luxuriously furnished than her Majesty's own, and were several times rebuilt to please the new favourite's fancy. Louis created her Duchess d'Aubigny, which entitled her to revenues from the estate of that name in the province of Berri, while Charles made her Baroness Petersfield, Countess of Farnham, and Duchess of Portsmouth. Her only son by the King was created Duke of Richmond and Lennox, the former title having reverted to the Crown on the death of Miss Stuart's husband.

Louise soon gathered around her the Duchess of Cleveland's *entourage*, these two being sworn enemies from the first.

There was also great rivalry and jealousy between the Duchess of Portsmouth and "Madame Ellen," as Nell

<sup>1</sup> "Royalty Restored."



Gwynne was sometimes called, for the King's favour. Louise always treated the King and Queen with the greatest respect; the populace, however, hated her, because she was a Catholic and a foreigner.

The year of the Duchess of Portsmouth's arrival in England was signalised by the famous assault on the Duke of Ormonde, which caused great excitement. Although the scheme to kidnap his Grace was boldly conceived, it fortunately proved unsuccessful. It was proposed to carry him to an obscure place and compel him to ransom himself for ten or twenty thousand pounds.<sup>1</sup> To this end five well-dressed ruffians, in long cloaks and swords, waylaid his coach between St. James's and Clarendon House on the night of December 6; one miscreant calling out to the coachman to stop, exclaiming, "There is a dead man in front!" The horses were seized, and the duke dragged out and disarmed before he could defend himself. One footman was threatened with a couple of pistols if he stirred from the back of the coach, but another escaped and gave the alarm to the porter at Clarendon House, who hastened to the spot, seized his master in his arms and, while his captors were fighting, bore him safely inside the gates, notwithstanding cries of "Kill the rogue!"

The House of Lords took up the matter, and an inquiry was held by their lordships on January 14, 1671. A large number of persons were arrested for complicity in this plot.

One of the King's daughters by the Duchess of Cleveland was the wife of Lord Sussex, and appears to have inherited a fair share of her parent's eccentricities. She struck up a great friendship with the Duchess of Mazarin, who had lately come to England.

Hortensia Mancini, Duchess of Mazarin, niece of the

<sup>1</sup> Marlborough MSS., H.M.C.

famous Prime Minister of France, was very beautiful, and was sought in marriage by Charles II. when in exile; but her uncle refused, and married her at the age of fifteen to Armand Charles de la Porte, Duc de la Meilleraie, on condition of his assuming the name of Mazarin, giving her 30,000,000 francs as a dowry. This marriage proved unhappy. With the aid of her brother, the Duc de Nevers, who procured horses for her, Hortensia fled to her sister Marie, married to the Connétable of Naples, the Duc de Colonna, then living in Rome.

The Duc de Mazarin instituted proceedings against his wife, who asked pardon and offered to return to him. He demanded, however, that she should first retire to a convent for two years on probation. This Hortensia refused, and as she possessed but a few jewels, she appealed in person to Louis XIV. to obtain for her some of her fortune. Accordingly, he arranged that her husband should allow her an income of 24,000 francs a year and 12,000 francs down. On obtaining this sum she returned to Rome.

Her sister Marie, after years of happiness, having nearly lost her life in giving birth to a child, decided to desert her husband. The two sisters fled from Rome disguised as men. Hortensia went to Chambéry in Savoy, and resided there three years in the society of agreeable and clever people. Marie also appealed to Louis, who had formerly loved her, but he did not approve of her conduct, and advised her to enter a convent, and one not too near his capital. The Connétable would have taken his wife back had she been willing to return, but she preferred retiring to a convent in Spain, where she occupied herself in literary pursuits.

Hortensia arrived in England in 1675, and was quickly followed by the Abbé de St. Réal, who was

much attached to her. Charles, in consideration of his former friendship and in gratitude to Cardinal Mazarin, who had shown him much kindness during his exile, assigned her a pension of £4000 a year. She would probably have replaced the Duchess of Portsmouth in his Majesty's affections if it had not been for her *penchant* for the Prince of Monaco. Charles at first was irritated by the preference she showed for this man and stopped her pension, but in a few days thought better of it, feeling ashamed of this feeling of jealousy which had no real foundation.

The Duchess of Mazarin, Lady Sussex, the Prince of Monaco, and the Portuguese ambassador were to be seen on a balcony overlooking the pageant on Lord Mayor's Day 1675. Lord Sussex so much disliked his wife's intimacy with the Duchess of Mazarin that he threatened to take her into the country, but without avail.

One evening Lady Sussex and the Duchess of Mazarin,<sup>1</sup> who had both learnt to fence, went into St. James's Park with drawn swords under their "night gowns"—a term then given to evening dresses—drew, and made several fine passes, to the admiration of the onlookers.

When at last Lord Sussex succeeded in taking his wife away from the court, she showed extravagant affection for Madame Mazarin by kissing her portrait rapturously. In consequence of this devotion she got on so badly with her husband that the following year her mother, the Duchess of Cleveland, placed her in a convent in France, hoping to bring her to her senses.

After the Prince of Monaco's departure Hortensia set her affections on the Baron de Benier, a Swedish gentleman, a preference which excited the jealousy

<sup>1</sup> Rutland MSS., H.M.C.

of Hortensia's nephew, Prince Philip of Savoie, son of the Comte de Soissons. He provoked and killed the baron in a duel. Hortensia's grief was such that she became ill, and threatened to join her sister and become a nun.

St. Evremond, her great friend, represented to her how unsuitable such a life would be, and persuaded her to show herself once more to the world. From this time she gave herself up to entertaining; the wittiest and cleverest men of the period assembled at her house; others came to gamble, basset being the favourite game. We read that, in May 1676, the "Duke of York hath bought a new-built house of Lord Windsor's in St. James's Park and given it to Madame Mazarin to live in as long as she continues here. She supped about ten days agoe with Lady Harvey, who is her intimate friend, and the King came and surprised them both."

The Duchess of Mazarin was gifted with great vivacity and agreeable conversation. She appears to have inspired an extraordinary infatuation and love in her admirers. St. Evremond wrote an *Oraison funebre* upon her some years before her death; this took place in 1669 at Chelsea. She died in great poverty and obscurity, refusing to have either a doctor or a priest at her bedside. The Abbé de St. Réal published her *Memoires* in 1675.

Such, then, were some of the events that took place in Sarah's early childhood, and such was the court to which she was introduced at the age of twelve years.

Sarah's eldest sister Frances, on her occasional visits at home, had much to tell of her life at St. James's, firing the imagination of the lively and wayward girl, who was herself destined to grace the court.

Sarah spent many happy days at Water End House,  
p and down the old oaken staircase in the

house of her forefathers, peeping out of the mullioned windows to look out on the busy farm life below; sometimes sitting in the wide chimney-nook of the barn-like hall listening to the tales her nurse had to tell of the doings of the Roundheads, the fear the great Cromwell had inspired, and of those stirring times when her father fought for the Royal cause and was taken prisoner; on warm sunny days dabbling in the brook that runs near the house, or scampering with her brothers and sisters after the cocks and hens in the meadows, living the free life of a country child, whose beauty and charm were such that she domineered over and was worshipped by all her family, and was consequently spoilt.

Richard Jennings, who died in 1668, was buried at St. Albans, in the Abbey where most of his family had been laid to rest. His death had a great effect on his youngest child, who passionately loved and mourned her indulgent father. She was now left much to the care of her nurse and other servants in the old home at Sandridge. Mrs. Jennings mostly resided at St. James's Palace in the apartments granted her on her husband's death, in order to be near her daughter Frances, the frisky maid of honour. Her mother's dependents worshipped the beautiful, wayward child, and these same humble friends taught Sarah all the arts of house-keeping, so much thought of in those days, and for which she was renowned in after years.

In the seventeenth century it was considered part of a woman's necessary education to be a good cook and housewife. Enormous quantities of food were consumed by all classes. An ordinary feast would consist of sixteen dishes for the first course, followed by two or three other courses besides dessert. Home-made beer, cider, perry, and mead, also the care of foreign wines,



sometimes doctored to improve them, would all come under the house-mistress's superintendence. In addition to this the lady of the manor directed the dressing and carding of wool, flax, and hemp. Distilling scented waters and other mixtures, now given over to the chemist, were all in her department.

Very little other knowledge could Sarah have acquired during the four years of her life spent at Sandridge. The distance to London was not so great but that Sarah frequently visited her mother and sister at court, and played with the Princess Anne before she finally took up her abode there.

When this was decided upon in 1672, Mrs. Jennings fetched her young daughter from the country. In those days people who could not afford to keep a coach hired a waggon, but the Jennings were a family of consideration, and before the Civil War had been rich. The old coach was routed out, the farm horses attached to it, and Sarah and her mother travelled to St. James's in state.

There is a record of the Princess Anne, when quite a child, visiting Sandridge; no doubt on that occasion the coach was also called into requisition. Private carriages were very handsomely decorated with painted panels, carving, and gilding; plainer coaches were kept for travelling. Pepys mentions in his diary calling at the coachmaker's about a coach of his then being built. The windows were of glass, the frames gilt, the coach silvered all over and then varnished.

In honour of this new coach the horses' tails and manes were tied up with red ribbons, and the coachman drove with new green reins! The bodies of these carriages were mounted on high springs connected by long leather braces, which made the coach swing and tilt greatly.

When Mrs. Jennings stepped out of her coach at St. James's she wore a fine white linen collar or tippet over a pointed stomacher; a handsome brocaded silk petticoat of large design, which reached only to her ankles; sleeves to the elbows, trimmed with beautiful old lace; a pair of high-heeled shoes with long toes, and green silk stockings, that being the fashionable colour; over all a travelling pelisse of black silk, with a hood. Mrs. Jennings also carried a large muff known in Paris as a *chien manchon*, because it was customary there to carry a small dog on it. Sarah was attired very much after the style of her mother. Both wore their hair flat on the top of their heads in natural curls, slightly friezed at the sides. This simple style of coiffure was peculiar to England at this particular period, French ladies preferring the *Fontange*. It is said that an adventure was the origin of this head-dress. Mdlle. de Fontange, mistress of Louis XIV., was out riding with him one day when her coiffure became disordered. She took off her garter and twisted it round her hair. This style so pleased the King that he begged she would wear it that way. All the ladies of the court adopted the fashion, and then added feathers, ribbons, gauze, &c., until the head-dress grew to enormous proportions. This fashion was dropped at the end of the seventeenth century, but was again revived in 1715, when it became still more exaggerated.

There are two versions of this change of fashion. One is that Louis XIV., becoming disgusted at the preposterous height of the *Fontange*, on October 1679 said, "Cette coiffure me parait désagréable." Next day all the ladies had adopted low head-dresses. Another version was that Louis complained that no one paid any attention to his objections until "une Inconnue une Guenille d'Angleterre (no less a person than Lady

Sackville, the English ambassadress) avec une petite coiffure très basse" appeared at the court, when the principal ladies went to the other extreme.<sup>1</sup>

It is reported in the private correspondence of the day that on more than one occasion Sarah and her mother had a desperate quarrel. This was in 1676, when Mrs. Jennings, becoming alarmed at her daughter's surroundings, wished her to leave the court, which the wilful girl had no intention of doing. Sarah, with her natural impetuosity and passion, said unbecoming things which possibly she regretted afterwards. She declared that if her mother remained at St. James's, "where she was sheltering from debt, she (Sarah) would run away."

In the end the daughter gained the day, and Mrs. Jennings received orders to depart. The estrangement was not permanent, as some years later, when Mrs. Jennings died, she left in her will everything "to her dear daughter Sarah." Quarrels at court were of frequent occurrence, sometimes even in the presence of royalty. It was by no means uncommon in those days of slight self-repression for open quarrels to take place, when candlesticks were called into requisition and freely thrown about to emphasise the disputants' remarks.

Sarah was not, therefore, altogether singular in showing uncontrolled temper. Although Mrs. Jennings certainly instilled in her daughters a love of virtue and honour, they laboured under distinct disadvantages. "Sarah's natural instincts were good, but she never learnt in childhood to curb her temper, nor was any effort made to train her mind."<sup>2</sup> The wonder is that she resisted the many temptations she was exposed to in the depraved court of Charles II.

<sup>1</sup> Planché, "Cyclopedia of Costume."

<sup>2</sup> Lord Wolseley, in "Life of John, Duke of Marlborough."



## CHAPTER II

### UNDER CHARLES II

(1671-1685)

"Here lies our sovereign lord the King,  
Whose word no man relies on,  
Who never said a foolish thing,  
And never did a wise one."

—ROCHESTER.

ANNE HYDE, Duchess of York, died in 1671. Two years later the Duke of York married Mary Beatrice d'Este, Princess of Modena, a girl fourteen years of age and very beautiful.

On her arrival at St. James's she found two step-daughters, the Princesses Mary and Anne, and in attendance on the latter, still a child, was a tall, flaxen-haired, beautiful girl, Sarah Jennings, who had been established at the court about a year.

Among the Duke of York's household at this time was a young man named John Churchill. His father, Sir Winston, had lost the greater part of his fortune in the Civil Wars, as many had done, fighting for the Royal cause. He had therefore retired into private life and devoted himself to the education of his sons. Young Churchill had been brought up strictly in the Protestant faith, and these principles greatly influenced his after-life. He came of a good family, being descended from Roger de Courselle or Courcil, one of the barons of Poitiers who accompanied the Conqueror to England. This family settled first in Somersetshire and afterwards in

Wiltshire, the name becoming corrupted in time from De Courcil to Chourchille and Churchill.

Sir Winston had married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Drake of Ash in Devonshire, and here a good deal of young Churchill's childhood had been spent. As a boy of sixteen he became page to the Duke of York, who soon favoured the handsome and spirited lad, obtaining for him a commission in the Guards in 1667.

When very young, John Churchill attracted the attention of the Duchess of Cleveland, who was supposed to entertain a passion for him. It was therefore thought more prudent for him to leave the court. Charles begged Louis XIV. to appoint young Churchill to command the British regiment in the French king's service, and this request was granted in 1674.

He served under the great Turenne, who used to style him "my handsome young Englishman," and he was in all the hard-fought battles during two summers on the Rhine. The French always admired Churchill, even when later he beat them. They felt he owed his military genius to the experience he had gained under their own famous commander, and judged him therefore an opponent worthy of their steel.

Churchill returned to St. James's during the winter months, and resumed his duties about the court. But before long he was promoted to command an English foot regiment, and at the time of Princess Mary's marriage, Colonel Churchill bought—from Mr. Villiers, who was appointed to the suite of the Prince of Orange—the post of Master of the Horse to the Duke of York. Churchill gave £1800 for this vacancy,<sup>1</sup> which a little later enabled him to marry.

It was entirely a political move on Charles's part

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Twelfth Report.

choosing the Prince of Orange as a husband for his niece Mary ; it was in order to bring about a peace with the Dutch.

There was a very sad parting between James and his daughter, who was by no means in love with William's cold exterior, although later she became a devoted wife to him. The Duchess of York wept so copiously that the Prince of Orange, who hated emotion, preferred to start in a very light wind and "tug only eight miles the hour, rather than return to make a second scene of grief."<sup>1</sup> The Prince of Orange and his wife arrived in Holland at last, but landed in such a bad place that coaches were unable to come within four miles. The princess had to walk this distance in a hard frost. The Prince of Orange left her shortly after to join his army.

The courts, both of St. James's and Whitehall, had attended the wedding ceremony which had taken place on 4th November. Among the guests in the princess's suite was Sarah Jennings, who, in all the beauty of youth and with the sparkle of her keen wit, had first attracted Colonel Churchill at a ball given in the Duchess of York's drawing-room. On this memorable occasion she was fifteen, while he was twenty-five. There were many opportunities for Churchill to renew his courtship with Sarah during the festivities. She had then been at court five years. Having heard much of the exploits of the young soldier, she felt proud of his acquaintance, and what no doubt enhanced the value of his attentions was the thought of his having left the Duchess of Cleveland's side for the sake of one of the youngest maids of honour.

Sir Winston and Lady Churchill opposed their son's engagement, which was shortly announced, as Sarah

<sup>1</sup> Rutland MSS., H.M.C.

had little fortune at this time, and they wanted him to marry the wealthy heiress, Catherine Sedley.

Possibly he was influenced by his family's persuasions, as for a time he cooled off in his attentions to Sarah; but she was too proud to submit tamely to the slight, and a letter from her, upbraiding him for his inconstancy and declaring she would join her sister, Lady Hamilton, in Paris, was too much for him. He wrote to protest against her cruelty, and they were reconciled.

There appears, from letters that passed between the pair,<sup>1</sup> to have been many ups and downs during the courtship. Sarah was not easily won, not so much from coquetry to enhance her value, but from pride in that value, and because her heart was not easily touched. She was, however, well worth the winning, for from the day she married Churchill till the day of her death she was faithful to him in word and deed, a virtue not common in those days. Her passionate speeches and waywardness were rather attractive than otherwise in her extreme youth. It is when these qualities in old age are not sobered with years that they prove so far opposite.

Sarah had a perfect figure, a brilliant complexion, great masses of fair hair, and large dark eyes, whose intelligence somewhat softened their commanding expression. No better description can be given than that of Lord Wolseley, who says, "Sir Godfrey Kneller has recorded for us her small, regular features so full of life; her pretty mouth, expressive of disdain; her slightly turned-up nose, with its open, well-shaped nostrils; her commanding air; the exquisite pose of her small head, always a little inclined to one side; her lovely neck and shoulders, and her rich straw-coloured hair, which

<sup>1</sup> These letters are given in the "Life of John, Duke of Marlborough," by Viscount Wolseley.

glistened in its profusion as if sprinkled with gold dust."

Colonel Churchill and Sarah Jennings were married privately in 1678 in the presence of Mary Beatrice, Duchess of York, who was very generous to the bride. Some months later Churchill took his wife away from court to his old home in Dorsetshire. He was frequently absent in attendance on the Duke of York, and soon after his marriage was sent on a mission to Holland. He wrote constantly most affectionate letters to his wife.

Two years later there were great debates in Parliament relating to the Exclusion Bill, on account of the Duke of York's religion. The King thought it more prudent that his heir should absent himself from the kingdom, accordingly he left with the Duchess of York for the Hague and Brussels in 1679; the Churchills were probably among their suite.

This was not the first time the duke had taken his family to Brussels; the Princess Anne wrote from there in September 1674 or '75 to Lady Apsley. The letter is curious, and is as follows:—

"BRUXELLES, *September 20.*

"I was (went) to see a ball at the Court incognito, which I liked very well, it was in very good order, and some danc'd well enought, indeed there was Prince Vodement that danc'd extreamly well, as well as if not better than ethere the Duke of Monmouth or Sir E. Villiers, which I think is very extraordinary. Last night againe I was to see fyer works and bonfyers, which to celebrate the King of Spain's wedding, they ware very well worth seeing indeed. All the people hear are very sivil, and except you be othere ways to them, they will be so to you. As for the town it is a



fine town. Methinks tho, the streets are not so clean as they are in Holland, they are not so dirty as ours, they are very well paved and very easy, they onely have od smells. My sister Isabelles lodgings and mine are much better than I expected, and so is all in this place. For our lodgings they wear all one great room and now are divided with board into severall. My sister Isabella has a good bedchamber, with a chimney in it, there is a little hole to put by things, and between her room and mine there is an indiferent room without a chimney, which was made a purpose for me. I have a closet and a place for my trunks, and ther's a little place where our women dine, and over that such anothere.

"I doubt I have quite tirde out your patience so that I will say no more, onely beg you to believe me to be what I realy am and will be your very affectionate friende,

ANNE.

"Pray remember me very kindly to Sir Allen."<sup>1</sup>

During the Duke of York's absence in 1679 the King became seriously ill, and James was hurriedly sent for. On Charles's recovery the duke returned to the Hague to bring over his family, but his brother would not permit him to remain in England. He accordingly left with the duchess for Scotland in October. They were attended on their departure by a procession of coaches, a great concourse of people accompanying them for several miles, showing them every respect. The roads were very bad, and on account of heavy rains almost impassable. The first stopping-place was Hatfield; here they received a poor reception. The Earl of Salisbury had been warned of their coming, and for political reasons purposely retired to a place six miles

<sup>1</sup> Appendix to Mrs. Thompson's "Life of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough."



off, everything that might have insured their comfort being removed. The only provisions left were "two does in the Hall, one barrel of beer in the cellar, and a pile of faggots"; candles and other necessities had to be bought in the village. James showed neither anger nor surprise, but declared "his unwillingness to be burdensome to so poor a lord." He directed his steward to pay for the faggots and beer, which amounted to eight shillings.

Except at York, where the reception was churlish, the duke and duchess were well received in all towns that they passed through. They reached Berwick-on-Tweed on 20th November, and made their public entry into the northern capital on December 4th, where James received a right royal welcome; a great banquet being given in his honour a fortnight later.

The following February the Duke and Duchess of York returned in their yacht to London, landed at Deptford, and came up the river in barges. At the end of the month the duke accompanied the King to Newmarket, the duchess remaining behind to receive her mother, the Duchess of Modena, who arrived at St. James's on a visit. In October, James took his family back to Scotland by sea. On his arrival he hastened to write to his sister-in-law as follows:—

"EDINBURGH, *Oct. 30, 1680.*"

"MADAME,—I hope the King has done me that justice as to informe Your Ma.(jesty) that it was by his command I did not wayte on you to take my leave of you, before I came away, as I ought to have done, so that you do not look on it as any neglect of myne, I am sure I shall never be guilty of any to you. I was glad to heare by the letters I received since my being in this country that your Ma. was in so faire a way of recovery.

I hope in God this will find you quite well. I beg your pardon for the trouble I have now given you, and that you will always look on me as being with all imaginable respect,—Madame, Yr. Mas. most affectionate Brother and most humble servant, JAMES."<sup>1</sup>

In some of his letters to his favourite niece, the Countess of Lichfield,<sup>2</sup> the Duke of York describes something of their life in Edinburgh, how they gave balls and had card-parties every evening. On 19th February he writes, "We have plays twice a week here in this house, the duchess not caring to stir out. When Lent comes we shall have no more plays, so that Basset will be the chief diversion within doors." He also mentions that he plays billiards and "goffe." The duke and duchess both hunted, and on one occasion Mary Beatrice had a fall and was laid up for some time with a sprained ankle. We may feel sure that the Duchess of York's amusements were shared by Princess Anne and Mrs. Churchill, both having acted and played cards from their earliest youth. In the spring of 1681, during their annual visit to England, the duke and duchess lost their little daughter, Princess Isabelle, who died at St. James's on March 2nd. While they were still in mourning, Prince George of Denmark arrived on a visit to the English court with a view to marrying the Princess Anne. He paid formal visits first to the King, then to the Duke of York, afterwards to the duchess, and lastly to the "Lady Anne," then aged sixteen. Very little conversation passed on either side. The royal brothers were, however, sufficiently impressed in Prince George's favour to desire him as a husband for the young princess.

<sup>1</sup> "Historical Letters," Egerton MSS., British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> Natural daughter of Charles II. by Duchess of Cleveland.

Shortly after the duke and duchess returned to Scotland, Princess Anne followed her parents in July, travelling by sea. She was well received at Leith, and conducted in state to Edinburgh. On this occasion Mrs. Churchill was unable to accompany the princess. She remained in London, where her first daughter Henrietta was born on July 19, and baptized at St. Martin-in-the-Fields. However, in September she was strong enough for the journey to Scotland, where she joined her husband and resumed her duties about the princess.

It was during one of the Duke of York's frequent voyages that Colonel Churchill was instrumental in saving his Royal Highness's life. The frigate *Gloucester* struck the sands of the Lemon Oar and became a total wreck. Churchill insisted on his royal master getting into a pinnace, and prevented it becoming overcrowded.<sup>1</sup> A large number of the nobility, and no less than a hundred and thirty seamen lost their lives, and all the duke's furniture and plate to the value of £30,000 went down. The Duke of York gave orders that the families of the drowned men were to be provided for. The pilot was tried by court-martial and condemned to perpetual imprisonment in the Marshalsea. The misery suffered there was far worse than death.

Notwithstanding this unfortunate disaster, the Duchess of York chose to travel by sea rather than by land. She embarked with the duke early in May, and arrived at Whitehall on the twenty-seventh of the month.

The King and Queen came to London that morning on purpose to greet them. Their arrival being delayed, Charles went to dine at Arlington House, to which place the duke and duchess were escorted by the

<sup>1</sup> Dumont, "History of the Duke of Marlborough."



noblemen and gentry on their arrival. The King was delighted to receive them safe and well. During the afternoon he returned with his queen to Windsor, while the duke and duchess went to St. James's. In the evening there were great popular rejoicings.

The royal brothers appear to have been on excellent terms, and the two courts very intimate.

Charles, in order to please the Duke of York and in gratitude for Colonel Churchill's services, created him a peer with the title of Baron Churchill of Ayemouth in Scotland.

The duke and duchess spent this summer at Windsor, going back to St. James's in August, where Mary Beatrice gave birth to a daughter, who was named Charlotte Mary. The next day Charles visited her, and returned to Windsor the same evening with his brother. The rest of the month was spent by them in hunting, going backwards and forwards to London, and attending races both at Datchet and Winchester.

Charles was very fond of tennis, which he played with great skill; generally either Lord Feversham, Lord Churchill, or Mr. Godolphin was his opponent. Very little is heard of Queen Catherine at this time. She led a very retired life, but on one occasion her household gave her a picnic in Windsor Forest; each member brought a dish, "Lady Bath a chine of beef, Mrs. Windham a venison pasty, Mrs. Hall two dozen 'ruffs and reeves and delicat baskets of fruit,' Mr. Chinning, on his daughter's behalf, twelve dozen of choice wine. The Queen was much pleased and very merry." In the letter giving the above information we learn that the Duchess of York "lykes Bartholemew Fair so well she hath bin at (it) againe incognito on Friday."<sup>1</sup> She was then eighteen years of age.

<sup>1</sup> Rutland MSS., H.M.C.

Early the following year a great fête was given at Gray's Inn on Candlemas Day. About a week before the event Sir Richard Gipps, attended by his revellers and a number of the nobility in their coaches and six, went in great state to Whitehall to invite the King and his court to a "mask," which invitation Charles graciously accepted. The whole court attended the entertainment, dancing being kept up till a late hour, after which there was a superb banquet.<sup>1</sup>

Although there is no apparent record of Sarah having attended the several diversions here mentioned, there is no reason to doubt her being there. At this time she was a person of no particular importance beyond being the intimate friend and attendant of the Princess Anne; but a change in her circumstances was about to take place.

It was during this summer that the princess married. When Prince George of Denmark arrived in the King's barge from Greenwich, he first "waited" on his Majesty at Whitehall, who received him in his bedchamber. The Duke of York then called on his future son-in-law, after which Prince George paid his respects to the Queen, who "had a chair covered in tapestry" set ready for him. Later the prince "waited" at St. James's on the Duchess of York, saluting her cheek. Finally he was received by Princess Anne, but "again little conversation passed on either side." Although slightly marked with small-pox, Prince George had a pleasing countenance, somewhat grave. He was ten years older than Anne, had travelled much, was fond of hunting and country pursuits, and possessed about £10,000 a year.

In the midst of the usual court gaieties, on February 2, exactly two years after the mask at Gray's Inn, Charles

<sup>1</sup> Luttrell's "Brief Historical Relation."

was taken ill of a fit of apoplexy. He lay unconscious for some time, reviving under the heroic remedies applied by fourteen doctors, who bled him frequently, searing his head with hot irons, and thrusting strong smelling-salts into his mouth. He lived four days after this treatment, and suffered such agony that his poor neglected wife could not bear the sight, and was carried senseless from the room.

The night before he died, he recommended the Duchess of Portsmouth and her boy to James's care, adding, "And do not let poor Nelly starve."

The Queen excused herself for not appearing, as she was unable to endure the sight of suffering, and she implored pardon for any offence she unwittingly might have given. "She asks my pardon, poor woman!" cried Charles; "I ask hers with all my heart." In his last hours he begged his brother to send for a priest. Huddleston, who had risked his life to save his royal master's after the Battle of Worcester, was once more called upon to run a grave risk. He was secretly introduced into the King's chamber, received his confession, and admitted him into the Church of Rome. Before noon on February 6, Charles was dead. The news of his death came as a surprise not unmixed with consternation. He had been popular with the common people, who had frequently seen him strolling in St. James's Park, feeding his ducks and playing with his spaniels. They had no love for his brother.

Immediately the King had breathed his last, the gates at Whitehall were shut. The Duchess of Portsmouth, knowing her unpopularity, thought it prudent to take refuge, with most of her valuables, at the French ambassador's. It was reported that she would not be allowed to leave the country until she had discharged her debts, which were numerous; also it was expected she would



return the crown jewels Charles had given her. The Duchess of Portsmouth had received for eleven years a pension of £8,600 a year.

It is not wonderful that Charles had suffered from shortness of money when one reads, "Lady Portsmouth hath a new debt of £30,000, must be paid instantly."

## CHAPTER III

### UNDER JAMES II

(1685-1688)

"He went like one that had been stunned.  
And is of sense forlorn,  
A sadder and a wiser man  
He rose the morrow morn."

JAMES's coronation took place on the 23rd of April, when the crown, not fitting properly, was in danger of falling off. Henry Sidney, Keeper of the Robes, kept it firm, saying humorously, "This is not the first time our family have supported the Crown." The untoward incident was much commented upon and considered a bad omen. It certainly detracted from the solemnity of the occasion. The night following the coronation a ball was given at Whitehall, while fireworks were displayed and the town illuminated. Lord Churchill was shortly sent by James on a special embassy to Louis XIV., to announce his brother's death and his own accession to the throne.

James had always been unpopular on account of his religion, but he soon managed to estrange all parties. The loyalty of his Protestant subjects was early put to the proof. While still heir presumptive he heard mass privately, but as king he threw open the doors of the chapel at Whitehall to the public for services of the Roman Catholic faith, whilst priests and monks were seen openly in the streets in the uniform of their Orders. At the present day toleration for another's faith is in

the natural order of things, but in James's time this was not the case. The country was not ready for such a radical change; it brought back too vividly to the popular mind the religious persecutions in Mary's reign. Toleration could only come gradually, and James by his short-sightedness postponed that day.

On Easter Sunday the rites of the Church of Rome were performed with regal splendour. A long train of peers followed his Majesty to the service in great state, among these the Duke of Norfolk carrying the sword of state. He stopped at the door of the chapel, not wishing to take part in the ceremony. The King said, "My lord, your father would have gone further." The duke replied, "Your Majesty's father would not have gone so far."

Parading his religion thus against the law of the land was a foolish move on James's part, but this, however, was only a beginning. It now became his great object to convert the whole of England to his faith, and he left no means untried to effect this. Even those of his own persuasion were convinced of the un wisdom of his methods, and all Protestants were greatly alarmed.

The landing and insurrection of the Duke of Monmouth was an outcome of the discontent and one of the first events of James's reign. Monmouth, son of Charles II. by Lucy Walters, a Welsh girl of remarkable beauty, had always been a favourite of his father's, who, however, had banished him from the kingdom at the time of the Exclusion Bill; for he was becoming too much of a Protestant hero, in opposition to the Duke of York, the rightful heir to the throne. He had married at an early age Ann Scott, the heiress of Buccleuch, had taken her name, and been shortly after created Duke of Monmouth in England and Duke of Buccleuch in Scotland. Mon-

mouth took refuge in Holland, where he was well received by the Prince and Princess of Orange, who hoped to establish a claim to his father's gratitude by treating him with kindness. Monmouth learnt to skate, and in return taught English country-dances to the ladies of the Dutch court. It is said his cousin, the princess, accompanied him in his expeditions on the ice, wearing very short skirts, to "the wonder and mirth of the foreign ministers." It was during his stay at the Hague that Monmouth heard of his father's death. The sad news overwhelmed him with grief, which he gave vent to in deep sobs and piercing cries. There was little chance of his uncle recalling him from banishment, consequently it is not to be wondered at that his admirers and fellow-exiles were able to induce him to head an invasion of England. The necessary funds were provided by his mistress, Henrietta, Baroness Wentworth, who loved Monmouth passionately, and had sacrificed everything to follow him into exile; "her rents, her diamonds, and her credit were put at his disposal."

William of Orange had insisted on Monmouth's retiring from Holland on James's accession, and he subsequently wrote to his father-in-law to deny any complicity in the invasion. He no doubt watched the trend of events and profited by what he observed.

In July the Tory Government was suddenly alarmed to hear that the Duke of Monmouth had landed on the south coast, and had already been proclaimed king at Taunton and Bridgewater. A price of £5000 was immediately set upon his head.

King James's army was under the command of Albemarle, Feversham, and Churchill, while large forces of militia and trained bands were called upon to co-operate with the regular troops to oppose the invasion.

Monmouth failing to reach Bristol, and finding Bath

garrisoned for the King, returned to Bridgewater and hazarded all at the Battle of Sedgmoor, where he was utterly defeated. He escaped disguised as a peasant, and two days after, on July 8th, was captured and taken to London. He was tried, found guilty of high treason, and beheaded.

The unfortunate people who had supported Monmouth were grievously punished, fined, maltreated, and many of them hanged by an infamous judge named Jeffreys, who was sent down to the west, and held a court known to this day as the Bloody Assizes. Thus ended the rebellion.

To return to the court of St. James's, soon after James's accession in July a Colonel Culpepper insulted the Earl of Devonshire in the Palace, upon which that fiery and proud nobleman followed him into the presence of the King, and pulled the colonel by the nose into the anteroom.

Such a *fracas* before the very eyes of the monarch could not go unpunished. Lord Devonshire was ordered to pay a fine of £30,000 or go to prison, notwithstanding he was a peer. He, however, successfully escaped, and for some time evaded capture.<sup>1</sup>

It appears that a large sum, no less than £60,000, had been advanced by the Earl of Devonshire's father and grandfather for the Royal cause, bonds for the amount being held by the countess dowager, who offered to surrender them to secure her son's liberty. This arrangement did not suit his Majesty, who had no particular desire to discharge the debt contracted by his brother. The only way the earl had of securing his liberty was by giving a bond that he would pay the fine when called upon.

James was not so extravagant as Charles, and the

<sup>1</sup> "Court and Society," Earl of Manchester.



large revenue voted by Parliament sufficed for his needs. He never called upon Lord Devonshire to pay the fine, and the bond was found by William after James's flight, and was returned by him to the donor.

After coming to the throne, James had little time for amusement. Occasionally we read of his attending some cock-fight or tennis-match. The Duke of Beaufort of that day, writing to the duchess, says, "The King has been this afternoon at the Cockpit seeing Lord Grandison's cocks fight, where I won 3 guineas of his Majesty and two of Lord Churchill."

Sometimes the King managed to hunt, and in May 1686 he had a famous run across the river from Newhall Park and killed in Hatfield. As the day was late and horses spent, it was decided to seek the hospitality of the Earl of Dorset at Copthall. It happened that Lord Dorset was dining out with a party of gentlemen, and Lady Dorset had taken the opportunity of paying a few calls in the neighbourhood. She had gone some distance from the house, when a servant stopped the coach and delivered the royal message. Lady Dorset would gladly have excused herself, being well aware of the absence of her cook and butler at Waltham Fair, but a second messenger arrived on the heels of the first, upon which her ladyship turned her coach and drove home, sending it back for the King. She then set to work with her maid's help to break open locks and doors, and exerted herself so well that on the King's arrival an excellent repast was prepared for him.

Delighted with his visit, James returned to London and met on the road the Earl of Dorset, who made many apologies for not having been at home to receive his Majesty. "Make no excuse, my lord," replied the King, "it was exceedingly well done and very handsome."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Strickland, vol. v.



The Princess Anne and her husband lived a retired life, mostly at Windsor, where they both could hunt, as from a child Princess Anne had followed the hounds with her father. Cranbourn Tower in the forest was the birthplace of Anne Hyde, Duchess of York, which accounts for the particular love Anne had for Windsor. One day the princess with Lady Churchill rode past the Chief Lodge, now known as Cumberland Lodge. Sarah was immensely struck with the beauty of its surroundings, and expressed a wish to live there. Anne thereupon said, "If ever it is in my power to grant this desire, you shall have it," and many years after she kept her promise.

Both ladies were mounted on a very different stamp of horse from those of the present day. According to old prints they appear heavy, solid-looking animals with heads too small in proportion to their size. The princess and her companion wore close-fitting coats with large cuffs, three-cornered hats with feathers, and short perukes. Anne could scarcely do anything without Lady Churchill's help and companionship, and when absent they corresponded on familiar terms. In her old age Sarah wrote, "Young as I was when I became this high favourite, I laid it down for a maxim, that flattery was falsehood to my trust, and ingratitude to my greatest friend ; and that I did not deserve so much favour, if I could not venture the loss of it by speaking the truth, preferring the real interest of my mistress before pleasing her fancy. From this rule I never swerved. And though my temper and my notions in most things were widely different from those of the princess, yet during a long course of years she was far from being displeased with me for openly speaking my sentiments, that she sometimes professed a desire and even added her command, that it should always be continued, promising never to be

offended at it, but to love me the better for my frankness."<sup>1</sup>

Princess Anne's mother was not royal by birth, so this may partly account for her hatred in early youth of the forms and ceremonies due to her rank.

"It was this turn of mind," Sarah writes, "which made her propose to me, that whenever I should be absent from her, we might in our letters write ourselves by feigned names, such as would import no distinction of rank between us. Morley and Freeman were the names her fancy hit upon, and she left me to choose by which of them I would be called. My frank and open temper naturally led me to pitch upon Freeman, and so the princess took the other, and from this time 'Mrs. Morley' and 'Mrs. Freeman' began to converse as equals, made so by affection and friendship."

On Anne's accession to the throne she became most punctilious in matters of dress and etiquette. But many years must elapse, and many events be recorded before we come to that part of her life.

Early in her father's reign Princess Anne gave birth to a daughter, and from this date the arrival of the princess's children appear annual events, but none of them lived more than a few years.

Sarah was more fortunate in her offspring; her second daughter, Anne, was born in June 1685, and the following year she presented her husband with a son, who was given the name of John, and in later years was known as Marquis of Blandford; a third daughter was born in March 1687, and named Elizabeth.

When in attendance on the princess, Lady Churchill left her children in the country, probably at a small house on Barnes Common that they rented.

On the death of Ralph Jennings, the owner of Water

<sup>1</sup> "Conduct."

End House, who had succeeded his brother John a few years before, Lord Churchill purchased from his wife's two sisters, Mrs. Barbara Griffiths and Lady Tyrconnel, their share of the Sandridge estate, which also included that of Holywell. This last place, named from a sacred well, so called in mediæval times, long since filled up, was five miles nearer to London than Water End House, and close to the main coaching road. Here Lord Churchill built a substantial house, and planted a garden along the trout stream, which is the only thing remaining at the present day to mark the spot.

Lord Churchill was in constant attendance on the King, and often incurred his displeasure by remonstrating with him on his unwise measures, but James was too obstinate and too narrow-minded to see both sides of the question. One of his objects was the repeal of the Habeas Corpus Act, so highly prized by all Englishmen without distinction of party; also the "abolition of religious tests as a qualification for office." This was to enable Catholics to hold important posts.

The Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland at this time was the second Lord Clarendon; the General commanding the troops Lord Tyrconnel, a Roman Catholic of bad character known as "Lying Dick Talbot," who had married Frances Jennings. He had himself tried to convert Sarah, but only received a snub for his pains.

The disarming of the Protestants in Ireland and other measures taken without his consent alarmed Clarendon, who, making a progress through the country, was everywhere treated by the Irish with contempt.

He soon found himself under the King's displeasure for not supporting with good grace the pernicious measures of Tyrconnel, but he looked to his brother, Lord Rochester, to reinstate him in James's favour.

However, Rochester was in no better case himself. The King had brought pressure upon him to become a Catholic. To gain time Rochester hedged for a while, but finally refused to give up his religion and retired from office on a pension of £4000 a year for two lives. Lord Clarendon was obliged to resign the Lord-Lieutenancy, Tyrconnel being appointed in his place.

James's Declaration of Indulgence appeared on the 4th April, in which he avowed that it was his earnest wish to see his people members of the Church to which he belonged; but since that could not be, he announced his intention to protect them in the free exercise of their religion.

At first sight this appeared an excellent measure, but it was unconstitutional, as by law Roman Catholics were under certain disabilities which could only be removed by Act of Parliament.

As the Commons would not pass the measure, James dissolved Parliament, hoping to secure another more amenable to his views. He set to work to pack the House of Commons with his friends and supporters, and no means were left untried to obtain these ends.

It was not in the nature of Englishmen, even among those of his own persuasion, to give up the right of a free choice of their representatives, and many would have lost their lives sooner than submit.

Overtures were made to William of Orange to interfere and compel James to abide by the Constitution. This prince had been laying deep plans and watching with keen interest the position of affairs in England.

Anne wrote frequently to her sister, the Princess of Orange, who appears to have had other correspondents who retailed all that went on in England. In one of her letters dated from the Cockpit, 29th December 1687,

after defending Lady Fretchville, one of the ladies of the court, Anne says :—

“Sorry people have taken great pains to give you so ill a character of Lady Churchill. I believe there is nobody in the World has better tokens of Religion than she has. I am sure she is not strict as some are, nor does she keep such a Bustle with Religion, which I confess I think n’er the worse, for one sees so many Saints devils that if you be a good Xtian, the less Stur one makes, it is better in my opinion, than as for her moral principles, it is impossible to have better and without that, all the lifting up of Hands and Eyes, going to Church will prove but a very lame devotion.

“One thing more I must say for her, which is that she has a true sense of the Doctrines of our Church and abhors all the principles of Church of Rome, so that in this particular I assure you she will never change . . . (while) on this subject (venture) to say for her Lord ; for tho’ he is a very faithful servant to the King who has been and is very kind to him, and I believe he will willingly ~~obey~~ the King in all things but am confidente his Religion yet rather than change that, I dare say he will left (leave) all his places and all he has.”<sup>1</sup>

The following letters also passed between the Princess of Orange and Sarah :—

“Loo, *September 30th* (1688).

“Dr. Stanley’s going to England is too good an opportunity for me to lose of assuring Lady Churchill, she cannot give me greater satisfaction than letting me know the firm resolution both Lord Churchill and you have taken never to be wanting in what you owe your religion. Such a generous resolution I am sure must

<sup>1</sup> Birch, 4163. Some parts of this letter are undecipherable, and the whole is very badly expressed. It is in holograph, and can be seen at the British Museum.



make you deserve the esteem of all good people, and my sister's in particular. I need say nothing of mine, you have it upon the double account, as my sister's friend, besides what I have said already; and you may be assured, that I shall always be glad of an occasion to show it both to your Lord and you.

"I have nothing more to add; for your friendship makes my sister as dear to you as to me, and I am persuaded we shall ever agree in our care for her; as I believe, she and I should in our kindness for you, were we near enough to renew our acquaintance.

"MARIE."

And another—

"If it were as easy for me to write to my Lady Churchill as it is hard to find a safe hand, she might justly wonder at my long silence; but I hope she does me more justice than to think it my fault. I have little to say at present. To answer the melancholy reflections in your last is now too late; *but I hope my sister and you will never part.* I send you here one for her and have not any more time now than only to assure you, that I shall never forget the kindness you showed to her who is so dear to me. That and all the good I have heard of you will make me ever your affectionate friend, which I shall be ready to show otherwise than by words whenever I have an opportunity."<sup>1</sup>

But this devotion was resented, when it clashed with William's designs, as will appear later.

Every one was anxious to know the Prince of Orange's opinion on the Declaration of Indulgence.

Hopes were entertained at Whitehall that his respect for the rights of conscience would prevent him from publicly expressing his disapproval of the measure.

<sup>1</sup> "Conduct."



William was to be bribed with the promise that if he would only support James, every assistance would be given him against France; but the Prince of Orange knew that, without Parliament, the King had little power.

The princess and he declared that they deeply regretted the course his Majesty had adopted, but they were convinced that he had usurped a prerogative which did not by law belong to him. James was much mortified, and imputed this reply to the influence of Bishop Burnet, who had taken refuge at the Dutch court. Ruffians were hired to kidnap him, and sent to Holland for the purpose, but without result.

In the natural course of events Princess Mary and her Protestant husband would succeed James, consequently the country had not troubled very much about his measures. However, when the news gained ground in December that the Queen was expecting an infant, consternation reigned. Should he prove a son, the hopes of the Protestant party were dashed to the ground, therefore every one looked to William to save them from the tyranny of their own lawful king. James had only himself to blame for this. The Prince of Orange's great object now was to unite in one body all those parties regarding him as their common head. He continued a correspondence with many of the principal men of the kingdom, who invited him over, promising to support him.

In the following letter, dated from Windsor, June 22, 1688, Princess Anne expresses something of the general alarm :—

“Having heard that in Scotland everybody has taken new commissions for their places without taking the Test, and thinking it of great consequence because

all that has been done there has been but a Forerunner of what in a short time has been (will be) done here, I thought myself obliged to send *one* a-purpose to give you notice of it, as soon as it was possible, that you may, if you can, do something; put a stop to it before it is gone too far, for I am wholly of your mind that in taking away the Test and penal Law they take away our Religion, though if that be done, farewell all happiness, for when once the Papists have everything in their Hands all we poor Protestants have but dismal times to hope for."<sup>1</sup>

This letter was evidently sent by messenger, who probably was employed to carry other important news.

On the 10th June the Queen gave birth to a son. For long all rumours of his expected birth were denied and scoffed at, for the simple reason that no one wished to believe it; and when he was born, stories were invented that the whole thing was an imposture, and got up by the Jesuits. In future years it was apparent to the whole world that this unfortunate young man was the son of James II., from his likeness to the Stuart family; but for long some credence was given to the tale. It is said James presented the *accoucheuse* with 500 guineas. It has been imputed to the Princess Anne that she contrived to be absent when her brother came into the world, but this can hardly have been the case, from the following letter to her sister:—

"COCKPIT, 18th June 1688.

"My dear sister can imagine the concern and vexation I have been in, that I should be so unfortunate (as) to be out of town when the Queen was brought to bed, for I shall never now be satisfied to take the child be true or false; it may be it is our brother, but God only knows."

<sup>1</sup> Historical Letters, British Museum.

The princess gives reasons for her being suspicious. She tells her sister that the Queen was to have been laid in at Windsor, but suddenly decided to go to St. James's, "where," says the princess, "is much the properest place to accomplish a cheat in."

In answer to this letter the Princess of Orange sends her sister a list of questions, numbering eighteen, desiring full particulars of the birth. This was to satisfy herself as to whether it was an imposture or not.

In the following month Princess Anne writes from the Cockpit—

"The Prince of Wales has been ill these three or four days, and if he has been as bad as some people say, I believe it will not be long before he is an Angel in Heaven."

Anne continues to say that she intends going to Tunbridge Wells for her health, and that she is glad to get away, as she has to put on a joyful face although feeling unhappy; that she finds it insupportable living with Papists, who have become insolent, but supposes there is no other remedy but patience.

The King gave an entertainment in honour of his son's birth. In front of Whitehall a barge was moored and illuminated, on which a band played while people sang. This was previous to the princess's departure for Tunbridge Wells.

Shortly James had more serious business to attend to than giving concerts, for in August there were rumours that the Dutch were fitting out ships, and getting ready some thousands of saddle horses and equipment.

By offering higher pay they induced Englishmen to join their fleet, and there was a general complaint that English ships were undermanned. Pressgangs were accordingly organised and sent down the river to collect men.





Queen Victoria  
Photographed by the English  
at the Crystal Palace





In September reports gained ground that the Dutch were preparing to invade England, and that 16,000 men were already on board. It was then that the King appointed Lord Dartmouth Lord High Admiral of the Fleet. There was not much time to be lost if effectual measures were to be taken.

On 4th October Lord Dartmouth called a council of war, and issued instructions that should the Dutch attempt to land either at Harwich or up the rivers Thames or Medway, lights were to be altered and buoys shifted or removed, so as to endanger the foreign ships.

Several noblemen offered James their services against the invasion, among them being the Duke of Newcastle, Earls of Derby and Lindsay, and Lord Jermyn. The hackney coachmen of London having provided the King with two hundred horses, several new regiments were raised, the arms and accoutrements to furnish these being taken from the Tower.

The news-letter of 3rd November contains the following notice: "H.M. has received an account from Lord Dartmouth that he is impatient to meet the Dutch, his fleet being increased to forty sail. Divers people have been with the King to desire letters of marque against the Dutch, but the King refuses to give them until the Dutch commit some act of hostility."

The Prince of Orange seized the packet-boats running across Channel, and thus prevented the news of his intentions reaching England. No one knew, therefore, where he would land. When Lord Dartmouth heard that the enemy had made for the south-west of England, he set off in pursuit; but a heavy storm dispersed his vessels, and when he had reassembled his fleet it was too late; the Prince of Orange had already landed at Torbay.

Lord Dartmouth therefore returned to port, and awaited instructions from the King, fearing to attack the enemy with his disabled fleet, and thus jeopardise James's cause. The King sent word that every available ship from Portsmouth was to be sent to strengthen his fleet, and that it was to sail at once to engage the enemy. The winds proving contrary, Lord Dartmouth could not make Torbay; two days later another storm arose and again dispersed his vessels, and they had to seek shelter in St. Helen's Roads. Even the elements appeared to be fighting against James.

William of Orange had set sail from Helvelsly on the 19th October, his fleet consisting of 65 ships of war and 500 transports, carrying upwards of 15,000 troops, with spare arms for 20,000 more. At sunset a dreadful hurricane arose, sending the ships adrift in the darkness; when morning dawned, they were scattered in all directions. After some struggling with the storm, on the third day the prince returned to port. The fleet having reassembled on November 1, another attempt was made with a fair wind, and after five days' sailing he landed safely at Torbay, and ordered a day of thanksgiving throughout the fleet and army.

The excitement in London was intense. Many secretly rejoiced, although they dared not show it as long as James was in the capital.

The King offered pardons, and promised to restore the ancient charter and privileges of the city which he had withdrawn,<sup>1</sup> but the time for these and similar reforms had passed. In a private letter<sup>2</sup> of about this date we read:—

“Reported news from London that when the officer informed the King that there would be no peace in the

<sup>1</sup> Luttrell.

<sup>2</sup> H.M.C., Twelfth Report.



city until the Chapels were pulled down, or blown up, the Queen put up her hand and gave him a box on the ear, and she did the like to the Princess of Denmark in her chamber, which the King is troubled at. The next day all the vestments and pictures in the chapel were taken down, and two carmen ordered to take them to Whitehall, but the rabble met them and made a bonfire of them all. Prince of Orange has hanged two of his men for stealing a chicken, and told the rest they had money enough, and when they wanted it, it was soon enough to steal."

James sent for the Lord Mayor, acquainting him with the news of William's landing, entrusting him with the care of the city, and giving instructions to proclaim the Prince of Wales should he himself be killed. He then started to join his army at Salisbury.

The Prince of Denmark accompanied the King, but deserted James at Andover with the Duke of Ormonde and others. On November 24th, Lord Churchill, the Duke of Grafton, and many more followed their example, and went over to the Prince of Orange with about four or five thousand men.

Lord Churchill wrote a letter to his royal master expressing his regret at the step he was about to take, but saying his conscience would not allow him to see the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion. James felt his desertion very keenly. When he first read the letter he could not forbear a deep sigh, and turning to Lord Feversham, who stood near, he said, "Feversham, I little expected this severe stroke; but you, my lord, formed a right judgment of the person and his intentions when you proposed to me yesterday to secure him and the rest of the runaways. The only course I can now take in this unhappy juncture is to throw myself

upon Providence, since there is no longer any reliance on my troops, whose minds are undoubtedly corrupted by the pernicious instructions of their disloyal officers."<sup>1</sup>

Before King James succeeded to the throne, Churchill had assured the Earl of Galway that "if ever King James was prevailed on to alter the established religion, he would serve him no longer, but withdraw from him."

As Dumont observes in his history, a conflict must have gone on in Churchill's mind before he could desert his king. "On one side his country, his religion, and the liberties of the subject were in danger; on the other hand, the entire loss of his own fortune and the ruin of a king to whom he owed all. At least it must be allowed that it was very uncertain and scarcely probable he would meet with so much favour under any other government." He hesitated until Dr. Turner, Bishop of Ely, pointed out that he had a duty to a Higher Power. He thereupon determined to join the Prince of Orange as soon as he landed.

The Revolution was said to have been planned in the cellars of Hurley Priory, near Marlow, at that time belonging to Baron Lovelace. The house was pulled down in 1837, and only a few out-buildings and an ancient pigeon-cot and ruins of the chapel remain at the present day.

On hearing of William's arrival, Lord Lovelace set out on horseback with seventy followers to welcome him. They were stopped at Cirencester and taken prisoners by the King's troops, but were shortly after released. Lovelace immediately set to work to raise a mounted force, and entered Oxford at the head of 300 men willing to support the Prince of Orange.

James returned in despair to the capital on the 26th,

<sup>1</sup> "The Military History of the Duke of Marlborough," by M. Dumont.

where a heavier blow awaited him—the desertion of his daughter Anne. She had been in correspondence with her sister Mary, and knew all about her husband's intended movements. Her conscience no doubt pricked her, for on her father's approach she told Lady Churchill “that, rather than see her father, she would jump out of window.”

Sarah was therefore sent to the Bishop of London to acquaint him that the princess had determined to leave the court, and wished to place herself under his care. Accordingly, he agreed to come about midnight in a hackney coach to the near neighbourhood of the Cockpit, the name of that part of the Palace of Whitehall where the princess had her apartments.

What probably hastened their departure was the news that the Lord Chamberlain had received orders to seize Lord Churchill's houses, both in town and at St. Albans, and also the person of Lady Churchill, as a consequence of her husband's desertion. The princess persuaded the Lord Chamberlain to delay the execution of this order, with the result that they both escaped.

The princess retired to bed at the usual hour to avoid suspicion, but between 2 and 3 A.M. slipped out of the palace by a pair of narrow back-stairs, only used by the “necessary woman” to go in and out when cleaning the room.

Accompanied by Lady Churchill and Lady Fitzharding, Anne drove away in a coach and six which had been provided by the Bishop of London and the Earl of Dorset. The consternation was great when the next morning her bed was found empty and cold, and her clothes of the day before lying about in disorder, even to her shoes and stockings, which in all the excitement had been forgotten. A rumour immediately went about that she had been kidnapped by the Papists. The King



arrived the same day, made inquiries, and instructed Samuel Pepys to write a full report of the princess's flight to Lord Dartmouth, from whose papers this account has been taken.<sup>1</sup>

From the palace Anne went to the bishop's house in Aldersgate Street, and on the following day, November 26th, to Lord Dorset's at Copthall—Lady Dorset providing everything they required. Once before her ladyship had risen to an emergency, as we have seen, on the occasion of James's seeking hospitality at Copthall when out hunting. Now Lord Dorset's former master and guest was shortly to be a fugitive in his own country and from his own people.

King James was undergoing terrible anxiety. In the news-letter of November 27th is the paragraph, "His Majesty gets little sleep but what is forced by opiates."

It was decided that the Queen was to make her escape to France, although she vainly entreated to be allowed to remain.

On the night of December 9th, the King and Queen retired to bed at the usual hour, but rose soon after and descended to the rooms of one of the suite who was in the secret, where the infant prince and his two nurses had already assembled. James handed the Queen, now wearing a disguise, to the Count de Lauzun and his friend M. de St. Victor, saying, "I confide my queen and my son to your care. All must be hazarded to convey them with the utmost speed to France."

Lauzun then escorted the Queen to a coach in waiting at the postern gate, followed by the nurses with the still sleeping child. St. Victor jumped on the box beside the coachman, who drove them rapidly to Westminster, where they embarked for Lambeth. From

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Fifteenth Report.

thence they travelled to Portsmouth, and subsequently in a man-of-war to France.

The Queen's departure was the signal for others to do the same, and many coaches and waggons were seen on the Dover roads making for the coast.

Two days after, on the morning of the 11th, James departed disguised as Sir Edward Hales' servant, leaving a letter for Lord Feversham with orders to disband the army, and as there was no money to pay the soldiers, they were to be allowed to retain their arms. James had fifteen guineas and his watch, Sir Edward fifty guineas. This was all the money and valuables they possessed between them.

While the King was being rowed down the river he threw away the Great Seal. It was found some weeks after by a poor fisherman and taken to William, who had it destroyed.

Sir Edward Hales and his pretended servant were seized by those on the look-out for Papists and taken to Faversham.

Two gentlemen rode hastily to Windsor to acquaint the Prince of Orange of the capture, and to inform him that the mob would obey no one but the prince. William ordered one of his gentlemen to go immediately to Faversham to see the King safe. Accordingly, Lord Feversham started with his coaches to fetch his Majesty. As soon as the news of the King's arrest reached London, "the indignation that he had formerly inspired turned to pity and respect. As he came through the city he was welcomed with many expressions of joy."

The Prince of Orange consulted with officers and the great lords who had joined him, and they all agreed that it would be a mistake to allow the King to remain at Whitehall. A deputation, consisting of Lords

Halifax, Shrewsbury, and Delamere, was sent to request his Majesty to leave the capital. They found him in bed, and he was informed that the Prince of Orange was coming shortly to London, and that it would conduce to his Majesty's safety and the quiet of the town if he would retire to Ham.

James was much dejected, and asked if he was to go immediately. He was told he might take his rest first, and that a guard should attend him for the safety of his person.

The Earl of Middleton followed the deputation out, and inquired whether it would not do as well if the King retired to Rochester. It was evident that this was suggested in order to favour a second escape. The Prince of Orange willingly gave his consent to this proposal.

There can be little doubt that the fear of his father's fate was before the minds of both James and his immediate followers, and unnerved them through all these proceedings.

King James left next day for Rochester. He went by water to Gravesend, where his own coaches met him. He was attended by three lords of the bedchamber, a physician, Colonel Graham, and others, besides his household servants, and, at his own desire, a Dutch guard. He was allowed full liberty, the Dutch soldiers paying him rather more respect than his own guards had done of late. Most of these men were Catholics, so they assisted at mass very reverently. When asked how they could serve in an expedition that was intended to destroy their religion, one of them answered, "His soul was God's, but his sword was the Prince of Orange's." King James was so delighted with this answer that he repeated it to all who came about him.

While at Rochester the unfortunate king wrote to "Will Chiffen":—

"I suppose you have yet in your hands the service of plate of mine which you kept. Put it into James Graham's hands for my use, as also those things you were putting up when I came away, and the antique watch that was in the same place, and what else was of value there, except pictures. Let him have also the three strong boxes which stood in the out-room, with what is of value, in the cabinet which stood in the same room with them, with the books of devotion and prayer books (which) are in any of my closets, with the altar plate, if any were left in the Chapel below stairs, and for so doing this shall be your discharge.

"JAMES R.

"Send also the sailing and fighting instructions, the list of the sea commanders, and the stablishment of my house."

King James wrote to Sir William Turner and Sir Ben. Bathurst about securing his shares in the East India and Guinea Companies.

James Graham above-mentioned was Keeper of the Privy Purse to the Queen, and had also been Master of the "Harthounds" and Buckhounds to the King. He was also a friend of Lady Churchill's, who had a great regard for him.

In about a week James II. successfully escaped to France. The house from which he embarked on the river Medway is still to be seen at Rochester.

## CHAPTER IV

### UNDER WILLIAM AND MARY

(1688-1694)

"Here we may reign secure, and in my choice  
To reign is worth ambition."

"With every pleasing, every prudent part,  
Say, what can Chloe want? She wants a heart."

PRINCESS ANNE and Lady Churchill, when they left Copt-hall, went first to the Earl of Northampton's and afterwards to Nottingham, where they were regally entertained by the Earl of Devonshire, who lived in a most gorgeous style, more suited to the fashion of the fifteenth century than his own day. He was among those who had invited William of Orange to England and collected men to support him. Colley Cibber, then a young volunteer, waited at table, and was immensely struck with Sarah's beauty and animation. He could scarcely keep his eyes off her, and listened with pleasure to her voice; and this impression he kept till late in life. The Princess of Denmark and Lady Churchill subsequently, on the 19th December, returned to the capital and their apartments at Whitehall.

William, who was endeavouring to conciliate all parties and was propitiating the great lords who had supported him, raised Lord Churchill to the rank of earl. He took the name of Marlborough, an ancient title revived, which had become extinct in 1679.

The Princess of Orange, who in future was to be known as Queen Mary, did not arrive in England until



the morning of February 12, 1689. Princess Anne, accompanied by her favourite, went down to meet her sister at Greenwich. In a Dutch painting to be seen at Hampton Court Palace the Princess of Orange appears in a low bodice, draped with folds of fine muslin, looped with strings of pearls; she has on a purple robe, beneath which is seen an orange petticoat; her hair is worn high, with strings of pearls and orange ribbons. A page standing in the background holds the princess's cloak, which has large hanging sleeves. Mary is surrounded by bowing courtiers, the tall lord chamberlain is pointing to a grand state charger, whose trappings are emblazoned with the royal arms of Great Britain. Young girls are strewing flowers before the Queen, who is attended by a Dutch lady wearing a stiff and lofty head-dress.<sup>1</sup>

It must be surmised that this costume was assumed for the occasion, or the artist is guilty of an anachronism; for it was hardly the dress in which to cross the Channel, the voyage having taken two days!

The coronation of William and Mary was fixed to take place on April 11, when both were crowned under one canopy. After the ceremony a state banquet was given in Westminster Hall to the peers, while the House of Commons dined close by, and each member was presented with a gold medal, worth fifty shillings, as a memento of the occasion.

Queen Mary possessed many excellent qualities which made her popular, but she was wanting in sympathy and tact, an unquestionable proof of which is shown by her behaviour on first coming to Whitehall. Sarah, one of those who attended her to her apartments, says: "She ran about, looking into every closet and conveniency, and turning up the quilts upon the bed, as people do when they come to an inn, and with no other concern in

<sup>1</sup> Miss Strickland. "Mary II."

her appearance but such as they express ; a behaviour which, though at that time I was extremely caress'd by her, I thought very strange and unbecoming."

Evelyn remarks in his Diary : " Queen Mary came into Whitehall laughing and jolly as to a wedding, so as to seem quite transported. She rose early the next morning before her women were up ; went about from room to room to see the conveniences of the house ; lay in the same apartment that the Queen (Mary Beatrice) lay within a night or two ;<sup>1</sup> sat down to play at basset, as the Queen her predecessor used to do. She seems to be of a good nature, and that she takes nothing to heart."

Bishop Burnet was so much concerned at Mary's remarkable gaiety during the coronation, that he took the liberty of remonstrating with her. The Queen assured him she appreciated his concern, but having received instructions from her husband to appear cheerful, she might possibly have overdone the part. Mary had no doubt a difficult *rôle* to play, and from being obliged to suppress her feelings before her stern and morose husband, she was inclined to vent her ill-humour upon her younger sister.

Sarah writes that no one could have laboured more than she did to keep the peace between them. They were both jointly concerned in supporting the Revolution, and their union was to their true interest and safety. Lady Marlborough considered the Queen to blame that this union was not maintained, and attributed their quarrels partly to the fact that King William found the prince and princess could be of no further use to him, but also to the difference of character and humour of the two sisters—Queen Mary growing weary of anybody who did not talk much, and the princess rarely spoke

<sup>1</sup> This should be a few weeks. Mary Beatrice fled in December 1688.

more than was necessary to answer a question. Sarah gives the following particulars in her "Conduct":—

"The princess, soon after the King's coming to Whitehall, had a mind to leave her lodgings (the way from which to the Queen's apartment was very inconvenient) and go to those that had been the Duchess of Portsmouth's, which the King (William) told her she should have. The princess requesting also (for the conveniency of her servants) some other lodgings that lay nearest to those of the duchess. This matter met with difficulty, though her highness in exchange for what she asked was to give the whole of the Cockpit to be disposed of for the King's use. The Duke of Devonshire took into his head that if he could have the Duchess of Portsmouth's lodgings, where there was a very fine room for balls, it would give him a magnificent air. It was plain that, while this matter was in debate between the King, Queen, and princess, my Lord Devonshire's chief business was to raise so many difficulties as at last to gain his point. After many conversations upon the affair, the Queen told the princess '*That she could not let her have the lodgings she desired for her servants till my Lord Devonshire had resolved whether he would have them or a part of the Cockpit;*' upon which the princess answered, '*She would stay where she was, for she would not have my Lord Devonshire's leavings.*' So she took the Duchess of Portsmouth's apartment, granted her first, and used it for her children, remaining herself at the Cockpit."

The princess then asked that the palace of Richmond might be granted her, as she thought the air there would be good for her children. This house, since the time of Henry VII., had been the seat of the heir to the throne. It dated from the fourteenth century, and was situated between the Thames and the Green. At the



present day only a few stones mark its former site. Lady Villiers had a grant of the palace, and one of her daughters, a Madame Pussars, had obtained the reversion, and would not yield her right to the princess; here was another disappointment for poor Anne.

During this summer Princess Anne gave birth to a son at Hampton Court, to the great joy of the nation. This little prince was named William, and was afterwards created Duke of Gloucester. Sarah's fourth daughter arrived about the same time, and was christened Mary, after the Queen. These names show that both the princess and Sarah were at this time on the best of terms with their new Majesties. Friction only became acute when the question of the Princess of Denmark's settlement was in dispute.

In the autumn Anne gave a ball at Whitehall to the Queen and her ladies, which shows they were still on friendly terms; but this friendliness was not to last. The princess felt hurt that no revenue had been settled upon her under the new reign. Therefore some of her partisans in the House of Commons "proposed a maintenance suitable to her dignity;" for Anne did not care to depend on the favour of the court.

The King and Queen were much displeased. One night Mary took her sister to task, saying, "What is the meaning of these proceedings?" The princess answered in a nervous voice, "I hear my friends have a mind to make me some settlement." The Queen hastily replied, with a very imperious air, "Pray, what friends have you but the King and me?" All this was repeated to Lady Marlborough, who observes that she had never seen her Highness express so much resentment as she did on this occasion.

The Queen made no further mention of the subject to her sister, but every means was tried to get Lady

Marlborough on the court side. Lady Fitzharding was entrusted with the mission. She attacked Sarah on the question of personal interest, saying, "If you will not put an end to measures so disagreeable to the King and Queen, it will certainly be the ruin of your lord, and consequently of all your family."

Sarah replied, "It is my duty to stand by the princess."

Upon this Lady Fitzharding tried to alarm Sarah's fears for Anne, saying, "These measures will probably ruin the princess. Only those who flatter you, think she can carry her point; and, if she does not, the King will not be obliged to do anything for her. It is madness for you to persist, and you had better ten thousand times persuade the princess to let the thing fall, and make all easy to the King and Queen."

The Earl of Shrewsbury was also sent to treat with Lady Marlborough. When shown to her apartment at Whitehall, after making a profound bow according to the courtly fashion of the day, he said, "The King has promised to give the princess £50,000 a year if she will desist from soliciting Parliament. I am confident his Majesty will keep his word; if he does not, I will not serve him a day longer."

"That resolution," replied Lady Marlborough, who rose to receive the earl, and stood during the interview, "may be very well to your lordship, but I do not see what use it will be to the princess should the King not keep his promise."

Lord Shrewsbury tried to convince Sarah, but without avail; she, however, suggested that he should see the princess himself, but, on going to acquaint her Highness of his coming, Anne sent him this message: "I do not think myself in the wrong for desiring a security for my support. The business has gone too far, and it is



reasonable for me to wait and see what my friends can do for me."

Charles, Earl of Shrewsbury, who had been sent on this diplomatic errand, was a Whig lord. He was known as "the King of Hearts," from his charm of manner and handsome appearance. Lord Bolingbroke, writing to Lord Orrery in 1711, says, "I do not in the least wonder that your lordship seems enamoured with the Duke of Shrewsbury. I never saw a man so formed to please and to gain upon the affections, while he challenges the esteem."

Sarah, however, was not to be won over by any charm of manner when her duty to her royal mistress was at stake.

The King, finding Anne could not be prevailed upon to relinquish her claim, compounded the matter to hinder a larger revenue being settled. Lady Marlborough asked Lord Rochester whether the princess ought to be satisfied with the proposed settlement, or whether it was reasonable for her to expect more. His lordship's answer was, that not only ought the princess to be satisfied, but she ought to have taken it in any way the King and Queen pleased. Sarah makes the reflection, "He would not have liked that advice in the case of his own £4000 a year from the Post-Office, settled on him and his son." It was therefore thought advisable that the princess should be satisfied with £50,000 a year, securely settled, rather than struggle for a further amount.

William had early announced that he would only accept the throne on condition it was for term of life; he would not hold office by virtue "of his wife's apron strings." It was therefore arranged that Anne could only succeed after the deaths of both William and Mary.

Lady Marlborough persuaded Princess Anne to con-

sent to this arrangement for the succession, as she felt it was for the public welfare. The princess was also influenced in her decision by her uncles, Lord Rochester and Lord Clarendon. They foresaw that whether she consented or not the settlement would be carried in Parliament, and therefore it was advisable to yield with good grace. It was important that Anne should consent willingly to avoid disturbances from the Jacobites, who had been urging her to form an opposition.

The news that James had left Versailles to take command of the troops in Ireland reached William's ears early in March. Accordingly, he issued the following instructions:<sup>1</sup>—

“To our Right trusty and well beloved Councillor, Arthur Herbert, Esq.,<sup>2</sup> Admiral and Commander of our ships in the Narrow Seas. Given at our Court at Whitehall, this 16th day of March 1689, in the first year of our Reigne.

“In case you shall take any Ship or Vessel in which ye late King James shall happen to be, you are to treat him with respect, and immediately send us an account thereof; but, without expecting any further Orders, you are hereby required to transport him to some post belonging to the States General of the United Provinces, and give notice of the arrival to the said States, and you are to dispose of the said King James into such person's hands as the said States shall appoint to receive Him; you are to leave such a number of ships and station as appointed by the other Instructions as they shall judge that service will require. By His Majesty's command.

“NOTTINGHAM, *Sec. of State.*”

James, however, landed safely at Kinsale, Louis

<sup>1</sup> Historical Letters, British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> He was shortly after created Baron Torrington.

having provided him with an escort of fifteen ships. With 25,000 men, also lent by the French king, James made his way to Dublin to call Parliament. Shortly an Act of Attainder was passed, condemning to death about two thousand persons unless they gave in their allegiance before a certain date. This had the effect of sending the English and Scottish emigrants north, to take refuge in Londonderry and Enniskillen. Both towns sustained a siege, and the former lasted one hundred and five days.

William now determined to take command in person. Great preparations were made for the campaign, large quantities of stores and arms being shipped from Portsmouth and from Highlake on the north-west coast. Sir Christopher Wren constructed a portable house for William's use in the field; it could be carried on two waggons and easily erected. William started early on June 4th, accompanied in his coach and six by Lords Portland and Scarborough. He stayed the night at Northampton, and sailed with most of the nobility on the 11th from Highlake, attended by 300 ships.

At the battle of the Boyne William was slightly wounded. The complete victory was considered wholly due to the King's courage and ability. After the battle the unfortunate James fled to Dublin, where he told Lady Tyrconnel that her compatriots had run away. With something of the old spirit of Frances Jennings she replied, "If they have, sire, your Majesty seems to have won the race." Remaining only one night at the castle, James was soon on his way back to France.

While William was absent in Ireland Queen Mary governed, with the assistance of a council of nine selected by her husband. She resided at Whitehall, with the Princess of Denmark and the Duke of Gloucester.

The threatened invasion of the French taxed Queen Mary's powers to the utmost. The French fleet, composed of seventy-eight ships of war and twenty-two fire-ships, was dangerously near. The combined fleets of England and Holland, consisting of only fifty-six ships of war, engaged the enemy off the southern coast, but lost heavily. Admiral Lord Torrington successfully retreated with the remainder of his fleet to the mouth of the Thames.

The nation was greatly alarmed, but the Queen showed throughout extraordinary courage and resource. A camp was formed at Torbay, and the whole coast put into a state of defence. These measures seem to have had the desired effect. For after cannonading a small village called Teignmouth and landing about a thousand men, who burnt some coasting vessels, they re-embarked and sailed for Brest. Here a pompous account of the invasion and the achievements of their fleet was printed.

While at Whitehall, the Queen used to go frequently of an evening in a barge to Chelsea Reach, and was there entertained with music. In those days this spot was quite in the country.

Queen Mary was rather fond of surprise visits. One day Lord Wharton arrived at Windsor Castle to pay his court; he found the Queen's coaches ready to convey her to Woborn, from which place he had just come. He hurriedly despatched messengers to warn his wife of the intended visit. The news threw Lady Wharton into a terrible state, for she had scarcely anything in the house, having been entertaining all the week.

Her steward was away and everything in disorder. She afterwards told her friends that she would gladly have given £5 for a partridge. Before she had time to

make preparations, the Queen, whom she had never seen, was at the door. Not only the Queen, but the lords and ladies with her had to be provided for, and the guards also had to be fed.

There was no opportunity to show good management, as there was nothing to work upon. Poor Lady Wharton felt highly honoured, and begged the Queen to pardon the poor entertainment, which was all she could offer.<sup>1</sup>

While the King was away, Queen Mary superintended the rebuilding of Kensington Palace. William had purchased this house from the Earl of Nottingham for 18,000 guineas, and began making improvements, which were entrusted to Sir Christopher Wren. William took immense interest in the building, and Mary continually wrote to report progress.

The original house was a simple country residence, built round a courtyard, with a small clock-tower over the entrance gate. To this several additions were made. A long gallery, beautifully panelled in oak, with deep embrasured windows and low seats, was added on the south side, and was known as the King's Gallery. The garden below the windows had been newly laid out after the Dutch style. The private staircase then recently added on the north side led to the Queen's Gallery, also handsomely panelled in oak, and decorated by Grinling Gibbons, whose handiwork can still be admired over the doorways and around the cornices. Several rooms lead out of this gallery. The view from the deep-seated windows is extensive; nothing but beautiful avenues or groups of trees beyond the round pond being visible, even at the present day.

In William and Mary's time Kensington was so completely in the country that highwaymen infested

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Rutland MSS.



the road between it and Hyde Park Corner. On one occasion Princess Anne, through her sister's jealousy having been deprived of her guards, was attacked and robbed on her way to Camden House. The roads were sometimes in a terrible condition. Years later, in 1736, Lord Harvey wrote from Kensington, "We live in the same solitude as we should do if cast on a rock in the middle of the ocean, and all Londoners tell us between them and us there is a great impassable gulf of mud." A patrol was supposed to keep the road between Knightsbridge and Kensington, but hardly a week passed but there were highway robberies, and occasionally the mail coach was "held up."

The King returned from Ireland in September. He landed at Bristol and at once repaired to Windsor, accompanied by Prince George of Denmark. The affairs of the kingdom occupied William till January, when he embarked for Holland, under a convoy of twelve ships of war, commanded by Admiral Rooke. On nearing the coast he quitted the yacht and, attended by about seven gentlemen of his suite, went into an open boat to make the shore. Instead of landing immediately, they lost sight of the fleet and the land, and were exposed all night to the fury of the waves, during which time the King and all the company were drenched. When the sailors expressed their apprehensions of being drowned, the King calmly asked if they were afraid to die in his company. At daybreak William landed on the island of Goree, and accepted the hospitality of some fishermen, after which he made another start and arrived safely on the coast near Meandsluys.

On William's departure Prince George, being anxious to help his adopted country, asked his Majesty's permission to serve him at sea as a volunteer and without any

command. "The King answered nothing, but immediately embraced him by way of adieu. Silence being taken as consent, the prince prepared his equipage and sent everything on board. But the King had left orders with the Queen that she should neither suffer the prince to go to sea, nor yet forbid him, if she could so contrive matters, as to make his staying at home appear his own choice."<sup>1</sup>

Lady Marlborough was asked to use her influence with the princess to bring this about. Sarah was not, however, to let the princess know that it was by the Queen's desire. Lady Marlborough would not consent unless she was at liberty to use her Majesty's name.

Upon this Lord Rochester was sent to request the Prince not to go to sea. Prince George, fearing to appear ridiculous if he changed his plans at the last moment, would not submit, until compelled by a peremptory order from the Queen. It is easy to see how fearful Mary was of disobeying her lord, even in the smallest particular. She had probably reason to dread his violent temper.

On William's return, he landed unexpectedly at Margate and found no coach to meet him, it having been ordered to Harwich. He had to make the best of a ramshackel old conveyance drawn by cart-horses, which was overturned at Shooters Hill. The King was not hurt, but Lord Portland and Lord Marlborough were not a little bruised and shaken. One of his Majesty's own coaches fortunately reached him at the critical moment.

We must now return to Lady Marlborough. On August 19, 1690, Sarah's last child was born at St. Albans; he was named Charles. The day before his birth Sarah, feeling low and depressed and wondering perhaps

<sup>1</sup> Sarah's own words from "Conduct."





The. Hurlborough, Bury  
(1200. 1092)



whether she would recover from her confinement, wrote out a draft of a will. Lord Marlborough had given her £7000 to dispose of. Among her intended legacies was £500 to release poor people from prison, which is a testimony to her compassion and kindness of heart. The following anecdote shows her in a different light.

About this time a family group of the Marlboroughs was painted by Clostermann. Horace Walpole in his "Anecdotes of Painting" says that the artist had so many differences with Lady Marlborough that her lord remarked, "It has given me more trouble to reconcile my wife and you than to fight a battle." Clostermann's art was not considered of the highest order, so perhaps Sarah's criticisms were justified.

About a year after Princess Anne received her grant, she, out of gratitude for all Lady Marlborough had done in the matter, surprised Sarah with the very kind offer of a pension of £1000 a year. Sarah says that at this time their circumstances were not very great, but she would not "catch at so large an offer" without first consulting her friend Lord Godolphin. He gave it as his opinion that there was no reason in the world why she should not accept it, as he believed it was chiefly owing to the support Lord and Lady Marlborough had given the princess, that she obtained her settlement.

Lord Godolphin, the lifelong friend of Lord and Lady Marlborough, had spent all his life at court. He first began as page to the Duke of York, later he became groom of the bedchamber to King Charles, which post he subsequently sold for £4550 to obtain another, "the place of the robes," from Mr. Hyde.

Although not a man of brilliant abilities, Godolphin possessed excellent business qualities. Bishop Burnet considered him one of the worthiest and wisest men of



his time. He was of a silent and retiring disposition, and in order to avoid talking, preferred to gamble every evening. He was fond of *bolts rims*, and used to send these frequently to Sarah for her amusement. Lord Godolphin married Margaret Blain, one of Queen Catherine's maids of honour, but lost her soon after marriage, which so affected him that he never quite got over it. His only son married Lady Marlborough's eldest daughter Henrietta.

Early in 1692 William, without assigning any reasons, removed Lord Marlborough from all his employments. After attending the King in his bedchamber one morning, Lord Nottingham was sent to tell him that his Majesty had no more occasion for his services. This unexpected blow Sarah thinks was designed as a step towards removing her from the princess's person. She says, "The loss of Lord Marlborough's employments would never have broken my rest one single night, on account of interest, but I confess the being turned out is something very disagreeable to my temper."

It is thought Marlborough's indiscreet remonstrances with the King for his partiality towards the Dutch and reserve towards the English, also his supporting Anne with her settlement, were the chief causes of his disgrace. Sarah asserts it would have been unbecoming in them to have neglected the princess's just claims to get a maintenance in Parliament, and leave her to the generosity of a king and queen who had, by several affronts put upon her, showed how very little they were concerned about her happiness. Had Sarah's aims not been just and right, she could, without losing her mistress's affection, have made her court to the Queen, but no bribe could tempt her to fail in her allegiance to Anne.

A faction, consisting of the Earl of Portland, Lady Fitzharding and her brothers, the Earl of Jersey, and

Edward Villiers, had succeeded in undermining Marlborough's influence. It was said that Lady Fitzharding was employed by the Queen to report to her the sayings and doings of Anne and her favourite. Some of the names, such as "Caliban," "Monster," &c., used by them would sound very offensive if repeated.

Elizabeth Villiers, Lady Fitzharding's sister, was for years William's mistress. This devotion dated from the time of Elizabeth's first coming to the Dutch court as lady-in-waiting to the Princess Mary. Although Elizabeth was not beautiful, she was gifted with a clear intellect, and assisted William with her counsels. This able woman, it is said, succeeded in winning back the Earl of Shrewsbury, who had wavered in his allegiance and had secretly corresponded with James. She married, late in life, Lord George Hamilton, whom William created in 1696 Earl of Orkney. He was a distinguished soldier, and fifth son of the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton.

Three weeks after Lord Marlborough's removal, Sarah attended the princess to a court ball given at Kensington. Before deciding on this step, she consulted her friends, amongst others Lord Godolphin, who said no one could accuse Sarah of a "mean court" to the King and Queen in fulfilling her duties to Anne. It does not appear to have occurred to them that the King and Queen might resent Sarah's appearance. Both William and Mary took it as a premeditated insult, and the following day the Queen wrote her sister a peremptory letter, complaining of her behaviour in bringing Lady Marlborough to court under the circumstances, and requesting Anne to part immediately with Sarah.

Before returning an answer to the Queen's letter, the princess sent for her uncle, Lord Rochester, and asked his assistance. He promised to speak to the Queen but refused to carry her letter, so the princess

sent it by one of her own servants. Anne received no answer to this communication, but she got a message through the lord chamberlain to forbid Lady Marlborough continuing any longer at the Cockpit. This was a despotic order, because Anne's apartments were a private residence and were settled upon her by Charles II. on her marriage, so she was at liberty to choose the inmates of her house. It might have been otherwise if the princess had shifted her quarters, as she had at first desired.

Lady Marlborough on more than one occasion had earnestly requested the princess to allow her to retire from her service, and employed every argument she could think of in order to prevail. But whenever Sarah made any "such suggestion the princess fell into a great passion of tenderness and weeping"; so Sarah felt that though the situation was sufficiently disagreeable, she could not leave her against her will.

Anne was anxious to do everything possible to please the King and Queen, except parting with Sarah, and therefore wrote her sister another letter. It was as follows :—

"I am very sorry to find that all I have said myself, and my Lord Rochester for me, has not had effect enough to keep your Majesty from persisting in a resolution, which must be so great a mortification to me, as to avoid it I shall be obliged to retire, and deprive myself of the satisfaction of living where I might have frequent opportunities of assuring you of that duty and respect, which I always have been, and shall be, desirous to pay you upon all occasions.

"My only consolation in this extremity is, that not having done anything in all my life to deserve your unkindness, I hope I shall not be long under the

necessity of absenting myself from you; the thought of which is so uneasy to me, that I find myself too much indisposed to give your Majesty any further trouble at this time."

Princess Anne determined to leave the Cockpit, but before doing so waited on the Queen, who received her with great coldness, "taking no more heed of her sister's professions than a statue."

It was therefore settled that Anne should go to Syon House, lent by the Duke and Duchess of Somerset. When the King heard of this arrangement he tried to dissuade the duke from lending Anne his house, but his Grace had too much greatness of mind to break his word, and thus the matter ended.

Syon House had been built by the Duke of Somerset, uncle of Edward VI., on the site of a nunnery. It subsequently reverted to the Crown, when Mary I. returned it to the former abbess and nuns, who were again displaced by Queen Elizabeth. Granted by James I. to Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, he spent a large sum upon it; and his son, Algernon Percy, employed Inigo Jones to enlarge and decorate the palace. During the first outbreak of plague in 1647, Charles the First's children were sent there by Parliament. Finally, the house passed into the possession of the "proud Duke of Somerset" through right of his first wife, who was now lending it to the princess.

While at Syon, Anne gave birth to a child who only lived a few minutes. Dr. Chamberlain attended her, charging a hundred guineas for his fee. During her labour the princess sent Sir Benjamin Bathurst to acquaint her sister of her condition, and to tell her that she was worse than she used to be.

The Queen did not think fit to see the messenger or to send a reply. After the event, Lady Charlotte Beverwaret was sent to inform her Majesty of what had happened. She had to wait some considerable time, as Lord Rochester was absent, and the Queen would send no message without first consulting him. On Lord Rochester's return, Mary sent for Lady Charlotte and told her she would go to Syon that afternoon and see the princess. She came attended by Lady Derby and Lady Scarborough. The scene that followed is best told in Sarah's own words :—

“The Queen never asked her (Anne) how she did, nor expressed the least concern for her condition, nor so much as took her by the hand. The salutation was this : ‘I have made the first step by coming to you, and I now expect you should make the next by removing my Lady Marlborough.’ The princess answered, ‘that she had never in all her life disobeyed her, except in that one particular, which she hoped would, some time or other, appear as unreasonable to her Majesty as it did to her.’

“Upon which the Queen rose up and went away, repeating to the prince as he led her to the coach the same thing she had said to the princess.

“My Lady Derby did not come to the bedside, nor make the least inquiry after her health, though the princess had recommended her for groom of the Stole to the Queen on her accession to the crown. Lady Scarborough indeed behaved herself as became her on that occasion, and afterwards asked the Queen's leave to visit me, because we had been old acquaintances, which was granted.

“The Queen when she came home was pleased to say, ‘she was sorry she had spoke to the princess, who



had so much concern upon her at renewing the affair, that she trembled and looked as white as the sheets.' But if her Majesty was really touched with compassion it is plain, by what followed, she overcame herself completely. For presently, after this visit, all company was forbid waiting on the princess; and her guards were taken away."<sup>1</sup>

The princess was some time in recovering, for the trouble she had been in brought on a fever, but as soon as she was well enough she sent for Dr. Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester, requesting him to take her letter to the Queen, and to use his influence to soften her Majesty, but this move bore no result.

Dr. Stillingfleet was a handsome man, and remarkable for his ready wit. When Tillotson died, Queen Mary wished to translate Stillingfleet to the primacy, but he was considered too old, and Dr. Tennison became Archbishop of Canterbury. Some time afterwards, Archbishop Tennison entered a room where Stillingfleet was sitting; the latter remained on his chair, observing, "You know I am too old to rise."

During all this time the war in Flanders had been dragging on at intervals. It was mutually agreed that no operations could take place in the winter.

Early in May 1692 the French and English fleets met in mid-channel, when a decided victory was obtained by Admiral Russell off La Hogue.

There were great rejoicings in London at the news. The French fleet consisted of about eighty-five vessels, carrying from fifty to a hundred guns each, while the combined English and Dutch fleets numbered ninety-four all told, manned by 40,000 men and 800 guns.

Great excitement prevailed along the coast when

<sup>1</sup> "Conduct."

four disabled men-of-war were seen floating down channel, off the Isle of Wight. A fine and rather piteous sight to watch these formerly splendid ships adrift at the mercy of wind and tide. Two of these were three-deckers of ninety guns, and another two had above sixty. They were afterwards observed with jury-masts, making for Brest, and were followed, a fight ensuing off Land's End. Our loss in the Battle of La Hogue was five ships, one of which was a Dutchman.

The Queen bestowed gold chains and medals on the captains of the fire-ships that burned the French men-of-war. Admiral Russell was rewarded by being given the portraits of the King and Queen set in diamonds. One of the French ships—the *Royal Sovereign*—was supposed to have cost Louis XIV. £200,000. Carved on the poop was the French king, holding the confederates in chains, the same subject being also painted in the cabin. The French lost twenty-five men-of-war and five fire-ships. Above 6000 men were sacrificed to the ambition of the French king, among whom were many of the young nobility of France.

It was reported that Louis sent Admiral Russell a bribe of £20,000, with the request that he would not fight, but only manœuvre. He applied to William to know how to act. The answer was brief, "Take the money and beat them." Five years later he was raised to the peerage, with the title of Earl of Orford.

Just before this victory, Marlborough, who had retired into private life, was arrested on a false charge of treason and committed to the Tower. Information had been given by one Robert Young, a prisoner at Newgate, who had forged the signatures of Marlborough, Lord Scarsdale, the Bishop of Rochester, and others to some scheme for the restoration of James.

Marlborough appealed to his friends to assist him in this dilemma. To the Earl of Devonshire he wrote :—

“ I am so confident in my innocence, so convinced that if there be any such letter, that it must appear to be forged and made use of only to keep me in prison, that I cannot doubt that your lordship will be so kind as to let me find your protection against such a proceeding, which will be a reproach to the government as well as an injury to yours,” &c.

Young's atrocious forgery was detected the instant he was confronted with the Bishop of Rochester ; accordingly, all those implicated, except Marlborough, were released without delay. The Earl of Marlborough was detained until the end of the term, when he was admitted to bail. Lords Shrewsbury and Halifax became his sureties, and in consequence their names were struck off the list of privy councillors.

The reason of Marlborough's detention was that William had discovered his correspondence with the exiled king. Doubts having been thrown on the birth of the Prince of Wales, James had invited several of the nobility to Paris to be present at his queen's approaching accouchement. He offered pardon to all, with the exception of certain persons he enumerated ; Marlborough's name was among these exceptions. James's invitation was not accepted ; clearly proving that real doubts had never existed, or that no one wished them refuted.

The fact that Marlborough was not included in the pardon would make him anxious to obtain it ; he also entertained, no doubt, some affection for his earliest patron. It is not suggested that he wished to bring James over, but only to keep well with him in case of





*Queen Mary II.*  
*From the original painting by William Verelstede*  
*in the National Portrait Gallery.*





she not them now?" The question was so awkward that the King was thankful to the drummer who created a diversion, and afterwards presented him with two guineas.

The young duke had a regiment of boys about his own age, whom he was accustomed to drill, and on one of the princess's birthdays he held a miniature field-day on his own account. On another occasion he had on a new suit, and the stays under his waistcoat hurt him. The tailor was sent for, but on his arrival was much alarmed at finding himself attacked by this infantile regiment, who belaboured him soundly, until he was rescued by the usher, Jenkins, who tells the story. The poor tailor was only too glad to promise the necessary alterations, and thus obtain his liberty.<sup>1</sup>

The King was as fond of the boy as the Queen, and when he conferred the Garter upon his nephew, buckled the order himself upon the little fellow.

It is not at all unlikely that a good deal of the jealousy between the royal sisters arose from the fact that Mary was childless, and the son of her younger sister, whose weak character she despised, was the heir to the crown.

Shortly after Marlborough's release, Sarah accompanied the prince and princess to Bath, leaving her husband at St. Albans. They started on the 15th August, no guards being allowed to attend them.

The carriage in which they travelled was of black leather, stretched on a framework and ornamented with large nails; the red, wooden-framed windows were protected by leathern curtains, which could be drawn at will. Inside, it was roomy enough to seat six persons. The body of the "machine," as it was called, hung very low between immense springs, the whole conveyance

<sup>1</sup> Strickland.

swaying with every jolt. At the back was fastened an immense basket called the *rumble*, for taking luggage, and to which some of the servants clung. The pace was slow, about five miles the hour. The coachman sat on a huge *hammercloth*, and drove four horses.

The roads leading to Bath were very bad, and on approaching the town the horses had not strength to drag the heavy conveyance over *Lansdowne Hill*, so it ran back, much to the alarm of the occupants. Lady *Marlborough* put her head out of window and ordered the servants who accompanied them—some on horseback and some on foot—to put their shoulders to the wheels, which had the effect of stopping further disaster. The coach being lightened, the horses managed to reach the summit in safety. But more difficulties were met with in the steep descent, so the occupants preferred to walk, while the horses were carefully led down into the town.

Bath had not yet become a fashionable resort. It was enclosed within a wall, and had four principal gates, which were shut at curfew; a few smaller gates for foot-passengers being left open a little longer. There was only one bridge over the *Avon* at *Southgate*, ferry-boats being generally used for crossing the river.

Princess Anne was received with great respect by the Mayor and citizens of Bath, who were much gratified at the honour paid to their town. They attended the princess daily to the bath, until forbidden by Lord *Nottingham*, who, at the Queen's desire, sent the following letter to the Mayor:—

“SIR,—The Queen has been informed that yourself and your bretheren have attended the Princess with the same respect and ceremony as have been usually pay'd to the Royal Family. Perhaps you may not have heard

what occasion her Majesty has had to be displeased with the Princess, and therefore I am commanded to acquaint you, that you are not for the future to pay her Highness any such respect or ceremony without leave from her Majesty, who does not doubt of receiving from you and your bretheren this public mark of your duty.—  
I am, your most humble servant,       NOTTINGHAM."

On receipt of this extraordinary letter, the Mayor of Bath despatched a messenger to John Harrington, Esq., of Thelston, to ask his advice. He recommended complying with the Queen's commands, but suggested that the princess should be informed of the order in the most respectful manner. This was accordingly done, and Anne, good-humouredly smiling at the petty malice of the Queen, desired the corporation to omit every mark of distinction to her in future, declaring it was her wish that the city of Bath should not incur the King and Queen's displeasure on her account.

Lady Marlborough was less tranquil under the indignity offered to the princess, as appears by the following letter penned by Anne before retiring to rest:—

*To* LADY MARLBOROUGH.

"Dear Mrs. Freeman must give me leave to ask her if anything has happened to make her uneasy. I thought she looked to-night, as if she had the spleen. And I can't help being in pain whenever I see her so.

"I fancied yesterday, when the mayor failed in the ceremony of going to church with me, that he was commanded not to do it. I think it is a thing to be laughed at. And if they imagine either to vex me or to gain upon me by such sort of usage, they will be mightily disappointed. And I hope these foolish things they do, will every day show people more and more, what they

are, and that they truly deserve the name your faithful Morley has given them."<sup>1</sup>

As the King was absent from England at the time, this scheme to slight the princess was attributed to Lord Rochester, her uncle, whose influence was then paramount. Owing to these annoyances, Prince George asked leave of the Queen to retire with the princess to Denmark. Her answer was, "she would consult the King."

Sarah had good reason for her dislike of Lord Rochester. He had in the first instance warmly opposed her entering the princess's household, and did all he could later to get rid of her. He felt that, could he accomplish this, he would be able to govern both sisters.

As Lord Treasurer in James's time, he complained to the King of the princess's extravagance; her father recommended her to be more economical in future. On being told this, Lady Churchill exclaimed, "Ah, madame, this is the advice of your uncle, old Rochester!"

She mentions some trifling circumstances that show something of his vanity, although it must be allowed that Lady Marlborough's opinion is somewhat biassed. She declared that he was fond of pageantry, and that on Anne's first coming to the throne, he made a progress to the western part of the kingdom, where he was gratified by being well received with "treats and speeches." When he was treasurer, he had his white staff carried at his chair-side by a servant bareheaded. Lord Godolphin, on the other hand, in his modest way had his white staff shorter than ordinary, that he might hide it inside his chair. But we are anticipating events.

On the princess's return from Bath, another method was devised to mortify her. As she was in the habit of

<sup>1</sup> "Conduct."



frequenting St. James's Church, the minister was forbidden to lay her text upon the cushion or to pay her any more respect than was shown to ordinary people. However, he refused to obey unless he received a written order from the Crown to that effect, and, as this was not forthcoming, this petty design fell through.<sup>1</sup>

Before long, Lord Rochester again attempted to get Sarah removed. "He came," says Lady Marlborough, "to Sir Benjamin Bathurst and others of the princess's family, insinuating that if the princess would put me away, he was persuaded the Queen would, in some time, be prevailed upon to let her take me again, which was altogether improbable, and indeed ridiculous, because my only fault was being my Lord Marlborough's wife; a fault which I could neither excuse nor extenuate, nor repent of."

Lord Rochester not wishing, however, to altogether lose her Royal Highness's favour, wrote expressing his duty and zeal for her service; but the princess was not to be imposed upon by his lordship's professions, and returned this answer:—

*To the* EARL OF ROCHESTER.

"I give you many thanks for the compliments and expressions of service which you make me, which I should be much better pleased with, if I had any reason to think them sincere.

"It is a great mortification to me to find that I still continue under the misfortune of the Queen's displeasure. And if you would have persuaded me of the sincerity of your intentions, I cannot think it very hard for you to convince me of it by the effects. And till then I must beg leave to be excused, if I am apt to think this great mortification which has been given me cannot have

<sup>1</sup> "Conduct."

proceeded from the Queen's own temper, who I am persuaded is more just in herself, as well as more kind to your very affectionate friend,

ANNE."

It is reasonable to suppose that Lord Rochester had sufficiently thwarted the princess's wishes to have been prepared for this snub. Things came to such a pitch that the Queen sent to Lady Grace Pierrepont, Lady Thanet, and others not to visit the princess, "for she would see nobody that went to her sister." My Lady Grace's answer was, "that she thought she owed a respect to the princess; that she had been civilly treated by her; and that, if her Majesty would not allow her to pay her duty to her, she would go no more to the Queen and oftener to the princess."

One afternoon as they were returning in their chairs to Berkeley House after visiting the Cockpit, the Prince and Princess of Denmark passed the Queen in her coach, and no notice was taken on either side. This behaviour was remarked upon as strange by the populace.

After their return from Bath, the princess and her favourite occupied themselves in needlework and looking after their children. The handsome bed-quilt now at Madresfield Court was embroidered by Anne and Sarah. It was probably worked at this time, when they both had plenty of leisure. They also amused themselves playing cards. Lord Marlborough was also of the party.

The games then in vogue were Ombre, Basset, Loo, and Lansquenet. The first was introduced into England by Charles II.; a little later a fourth player was added, when it was called Quadrille. Basset, said by Dr. Johnson to have been invented at Venice, was a gambling game. Lansquenet, a French card game, took its name from the Lansquenets or light German troopers employed by the kings of France in the fifteenth century.

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Another drawing-room game was Comet, played with cards and a board, and probably with dice.

A few years before, gambling had become the dominant passion, ladies as well as gentlemen preferring it to any other amusement. Lady Mary W. Montague wrote, several years later, that in her youth the most fashionable game was Brag, then Crimp, afterwards Hazard and Commerce, and lastly Quadrille and Whist.

## CHAPTER V

### UNDER WILLIAM III

(1694-1702)

" All desperate hazards courage do create,  
As he plays frankly who has least estate :  
Presence of mind and courage in distress  
Are more than armies to procure success."

TOWARDS the end of the year 1694 small-pox raged in London. No rank of life was exempt ; there was scarcely a family that had not lost, some time or other, a member from this terrible complaint.

Queen Mary sickened while at Kensington, but it was three days before the illness declared itself. When the Queen became aware that she had contracted that dreadful malady, she retired to her oak-panelled apartment, dismissed her attendants, and shut herself up all night, destroying her letters from the King and other private papers. Mary knew the disorder was likely to prove fatal, and she had no wish for unsympathetic eyes to pry into the secrets of her life with William. Her love for her husband was great ; she would not let him appear at a disadvantage, some of his epistles being far from loving. So in the dark watches of the night, burning with fever, she toiled at her writing-table destroying these records.

There is a curious old oak writing-table to be seen at Kensington Palace that might well have been Queen

Mary's. It has two drawers with drop handles, and is covered with much-worn green cloth; the back of the table is raised to form a locker, the lid of which lifts up.

The following day her Majesty was too ill to rise, the malady being much aggravated by her night's vigil. The King was greatly concerned, ordered a bed to be placed in her room, and saw to her nourishment himself. From the moment he realised the seriousness of her illness he never left her side, stifling his asthmatic cough not to disturb her.

On waking from a long lethargy she asked where the King was, as she did not hear him cough. William called Bishop Burnet into his closet, where he gave way to his grief, crying out that there was no hope for the Queen, and that from being the happiest he was now going to be the most miserable creature upon earth. He told the bishop that during the whole course of their marriage he had never known in her one single fault; there was worth in her that no one knew besides himself.<sup>1</sup>

Never was such universal sorrow seen in a court or in a town as at this time. All people, men and women, young and old, could scarcely refrain from tears. Many condemned Dr. Radcliffe's treatment, but the physician himself declared he was not called until human skill could be of no avail.

When the Princess Anne heard of her sister's serious illness, she sent a lady of the bedchamber to present her humble duty to the Queen, and to ask permission to wait upon her. The message was delivered to Lady Derby, who carried it to the Queen, and came out some time after, saying the King would send an answer next

<sup>1</sup> Burnet's "History of His Own Times."



day. Accordingly, the following lines were addressed to the lady who had taken the message :—

“MADAM,—I am commanded by the King and Queen to tell you they desire you would let the princess know they both thank her for sending and desiring to come ; but it being thought so necessary to keep the Queen as quiet as possible, hope she will defer it.—I am, madam, your ladyship’s most humble servant, E. DERBY.

“Pray, madam, present my humble duty to the princess.”

Sarah says, “This civil answer, and my Lady Derby’s postscript, made me conclude, more than if the college of physicians had told me, that the disease was mortal.”

The princess sent every day to inquire after the Queen, and one message at least reached her Majesty, for Lady Fitzharding delivered it in person, expressing at the same time the concern felt by the princess, to which the Queen returned no answer but a cold thanks. The sisters never met again.

The King’s liaison with Elizabeth Villiers preyed upon Mary’s mind. She asked Archbishop Tenison to give William a note she had written on the subject, as she could not bear speaking of it to her husband. Confiding in the archbishop her sufferings on this account, she begged he would use his influence with the King to break off the connection. This he promised to do, and hereafter gained a good deal of ascendancy over William.

Queen Mary died on 28th December 1694, in her thirty-third year, to the inexpressible grief of the King, who for some weeks after her death would neither see company nor attend to business of state. William showed more heart than he is usually credited with. His cold, apathetic nature was stirred to its depths at the

loss of one devoted to him, but whom he had frequently treated with harshness and neglect.

The Queen's remains were removed from Kensington to Whitehall, where they lay in state in the banqueting-hall of the palace. Four ladies of honour were stationed about the coffin when the public were admitted, between the hours of twelve and five; they were relieved every half-hour. Railings covered with black cloth were erected from the palace to Westminster Abbey, where the final ceremony was to take place.

When the body was removed, three hundred old women formed part of the cortège; they were given a long black gown and £5 apiece, while each one was provided with a boy to hold up her train. These women also received a weekly sum during the preparations.

The palaces of Whitehall, Kensington, Hampton Court, and the presence chamber at Windsor were draped in black, for which purpose the King ordered six thousand yards of black cloth; his apartments were hung with purple velvet, for which four hundred yards were used.

The mausoleum erected at Westminster for Mary's funeral obsequies was elaborately decorated with silver ornaments and flags. An engraving of this remarkable structure gives one an idea of the pomp and pageantry displayed on all ceremonial occasions at that time. Four obelisks support the canopy, at the base of these are emblems representing the United Kingdom; two only are seen; one has the rose and crown, another the Welsh harp. At the summit of the four points are the lion and the unicorn, while in the centre apex two cherubs are supporting the crown. The drapery was of purple cloth or velvet, the monogram M. being repeated on the pillars; the royal arms can be seen in the centre

of the canopy. The coffin itself was covered with a handsome pall, and on a white satin cushion reposed the late queen's crown ; the orb is below, but no sceptre. Three chandeliers, containing six candles each, are suspended from above, while a double row of candles run around the frieze. The funeral cost a hundred thousand pounds.

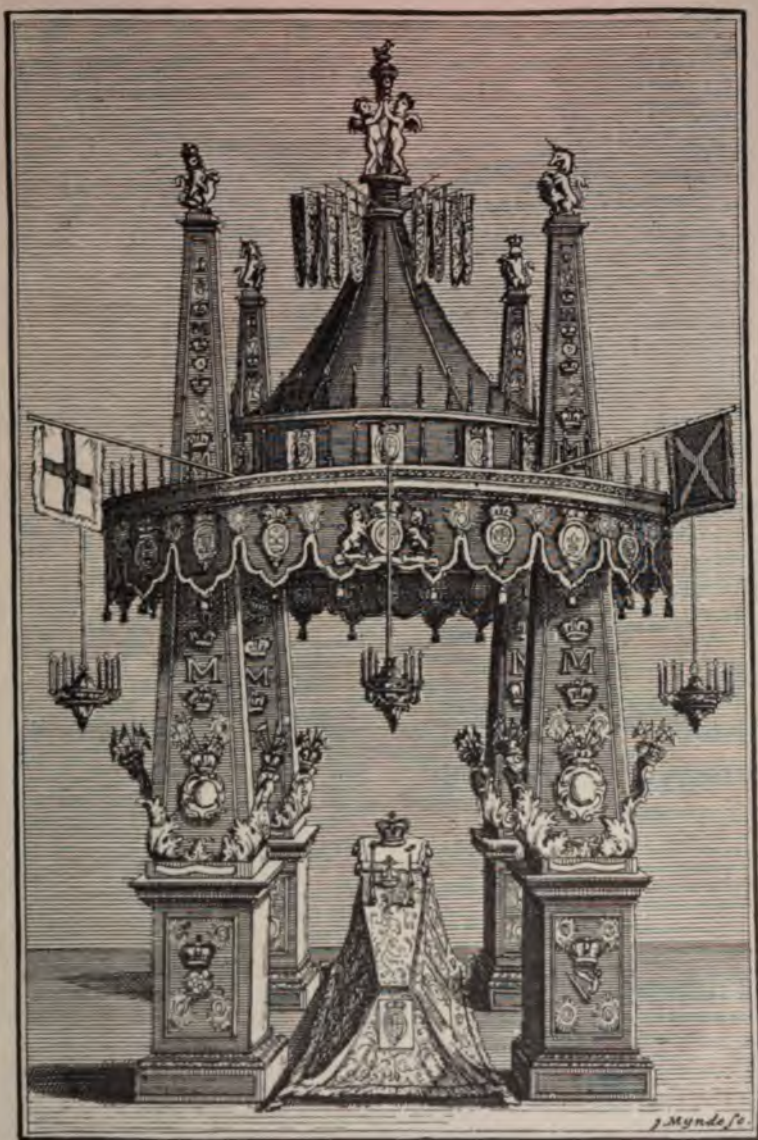
A letter written by a schoolboy in 1697 says, "When orders *was* given that every one should go into mourning for the Queen, some Jacobite hung Tyburne in mourning, with a paper fastened to it with this inscription on it, 'I mourn because you died not here.' The Jacobites in Bristol caused the bells to be rung, and went dancing down the streets, playing 'The King shall enjoy his own again.'"<sup>1</sup>

It is possible Mary had absorbed something of William's cold disposition from continually suppressing her feelings, but, although neither a dutiful daughter nor an affectionate sister, she was a devoted wife. In appearance she was tall and majestic, had an oval face with a fine countenance and expression, and possessed many excellent qualities.

By the advice of Lord Sunderland and others, the Princess of Denmark wrote a letter of condolence to William ; and shortly after the princess obtained the King's permission to wait upon him at Kensington. On this occasion her Highness was received with extraordinary civility. William saw it was not to his interest to keep up the quarrel with the heir to the throne.

Soon after Mary's death, William granted the Princess of Denmark apartments in St. James's Palace, which had always been occupied by the heir apparent. Accordingly, some months later, Princess Anne with Prince George and her family migrated to their new

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Pine Coffin, Esq., MSS.



*The Mausoleum Erected in Westminster Abbey, at the  
Funeral Obsequies of QUEEN MARY II*





abode. Lady Marlborough also accompanied her royal mistress and was granted "lodgings" in the palace, which she occupied until the final rupture fifteen years later.

There was a charming prospect from the windows of the palace. Beyond the wall enclosing the private garden could be seen the two long rows of trees forming the Mall, and where previously an unhealthy swamp existed was now the artificial lake. In the distance towered the fine structure of Westminster Abbey. The Mall was still a fashionable promenade, although the game known as "Pall Mall" had been given up.

On May 12th the King embarked for Holland, and started the campaign in which he recaptured Namur, which had fallen to France three years before. The retaking of Namur by William in person on August 23rd was considered a great exploit. Situated on the jointure of the rivers Meuse and Sambre, it was the best fortified place in Europe, both by nature and art. The town had a strong garrison, commanded by a marshal of France, and there were besides three lieutenant-generals and eleven brigadiers to oppose William.

The King in the early part of the siege, during an attack on some outpost, repeatedly exclaimed with great emotion, "See my brave English! See my brave English!"

Anne, against Sarah's advice, wrote to the King to congratulate him on his success, and felt rebuffed at receiving no reply.

The next important event after William's return was the arrival of two envoys from Venice, attended by about forty noblemen. They were lodged in the Duke of Norfolk's house in St. James's Square, and made their public entry in a most gorgeous fashion. The

envoy's coach, manufactured in France, was of beaten gold and silver. The handsome dresses of the nobles corresponded with this display, which was worthy of the ancient glories of their native town.

The King granted them an audience at Whitehall, where Signor Soranso received the honour of knight-hood. This privilege was claimed by the Republic of Venice on the first reception of its ambassadors. A large number of the nobility witnessed the ceremony, which took place in the banqueting-hall.

It was a sight to be remembered, the King and peers in their robes and stately wigs, the foreign nobles forming a group somewhat barbaric in splendour, the ladies of the court in full dress, among whom was Lady Marlborough in attendance on the princess, who had become, now there was no queen, the first lady of the land.

The banqueting-hall, the scene of this pageant, was almost the only building left standing when, three years later, a disastrous fire took place at the palace of Whitehall. It was caused through the carelessness of a servant who put charcoal ashes into a cupboard. A few years before a fire had originated through a housemaid burning off a candle from a bunch of dips, but the damage done then was not so serious as now. The two chapels, Romanist and Protestant, the guard-room, the treasury and council chambers, the long gallery leading to the gatehouse, the King's and late Queen's apartments and those belonging to the suite, with the exception of Lord Portland's and Lord Essex's, were destroyed. The King was much concerned, and on viewing the ruins exclaimed, "If God give me leave, I will rebuild it much finer than before." Sir Christopher Wren was instructed to survey the spot, and estimated it would take four years to rebuild. The banqueting-

hall was converted into a chapel, council chamber, and treasury.

Before the fire, the palace of Whitehall extended right across what is now Parliament Street to the river.

In course of time the young Duke of Gloucester was considered old enough to be put into men's hands. Accordingly, William applied to Parliament for a sum to cover the expenses of his establishment. The request was granted and a large revenue set aside for the purpose, but William would only allow £5000 a year for the duke's household expenses, and refused to advance any money, although it was needed to buy plate, linen, and furniture. The princess had to bear this expense herself.

The King appointed the Earl of Marlborough governor to the young duke, and to show his appreciation of his services and the confidence he reposed in him, said: "My lord, teach him but to be what you are, and my nephew cannot want accomplishments."

Dr. Gilbert Burnet was appointed preceptor at a salary of £1200 a year, which amount the worthy doctor gave away in charity. Anne disliked him, and declared that William only appointed him to annoy her.

Burnet had complained to Queen Mary that the ladies of the court looked about them and not at him during his sermons. Later he prevailed on Princess Anne to have high pews erected in the chapel at St. James's, which would effectually prevent wandering eyes. This fashion became general all over the country, and is still to be met with in old country parishes. As for the young ladies for whose spiritual welfare they were devised, their indignation was only surpassed by the rage of their admirers.

The following skit was accordingly composed and circulated :—

“ When Burnet perceived that the beautiful dames,  
Who flocked to the chapel of Holy St. James,  
On their lovers alone their kind looks did bestow,  
And smiled not on him when he bellowed below,  
To the princess he went  
With the pious intent  
This dangerous plot in the church to prevent ;  
‘ Oh, madam, said he, our religion is lost,  
If the ladies thus ogle the knights of the tost (toast).’ ”<sup>1</sup>

Burnet was fifty-five at the time of his appointment, and he was considered a very learned man. Being conscientious, he offered to resign his bishopric of Salisbury, but was overruled ; however, he insisted on the young duke residing the whole summer at Windsor, which was in his diocese.

The princess had been delighted to receive a message from the King, saying : “ Except for the professors whom he wished to select, she might choose the other servants for her son’s establishment.” Anne immediately set herself to provide proper persons. Mr. Boscawen and a son of Secretary Vernon were to be grooms of the bedchamber, and the sons of the Earls of Bridgewater and Berkeley were to be pages of honour, and so on.

Whether the King forgot his promise, or whatever the reason, before starting on his campaign he told Lord Marlborough he would send from abroad a list of the servants he intended to select for the duke. Upon this Lord Marlborough took the liberty of reminding the King of his former message. He pointed out the great mortification it would be to the princess if she were unable to keep her promises, also the

<sup>1</sup> Miss Strickland. “ Anne.”



disappointment might cause injury to her health, as she was shortly expecting her accouchement. Hereupon William fell into a great passion and said she should not be queen before her time, and that he would make a list of what servants the duke should have. Sarah says: "The King was so peremptory that Lord Marlborough could say no more, and had no expedient left but to get Lord Albemarle to try and bring him to reason, which his lordship promised to do. Accordingly, he took Lord Marlborough's list of the persons the princess had chosen, and carried it with him to Holland. In conclusion, that list was approved with very few alterations. But this was, without question, not so much owing to the King's goodness, as to the happy choice of servants the princess had made."

The Duke of Gloucester was a most delicate child, with a large head. He had frequent attacks of fever, and suffered from water on the brain; this malady having a stimulating effect on mental capacity, all were amazed at the marvellous progress he made with his studies.

He was able four times a year to pass an examination on such subjects as jurisprudence, Gothic law, and the feudal system. This abnormal development of brain affected his weak little body, which had no strength to resist disease. It was most unfortunate for him that Dr. Radcliffe, who had known his constitution from birth, should have been dismissed from the princess's household.

James II. had appointed Dr. Radcliffe physician to Princess Anne in 1686, but he had unfortunately offended the princess at the time of her flight to Nottingham two years later. Anne had been taken ill, so Dr. Radcliffe was sent for, but being devoted to



James and indignant at her conduct to her father, he refused to come. This first offence was followed by others. The Princess of Denmark had always been remarkable for her large appetite. As she grew older she took stimulants to improve her digestion, and then became low-spirited and nervous in regard to her health. She was in the habit of sending for Dr. Radcliffe just when he was opening his second bottle of sack. One evening he declined to come, affecting disbelief in her illness and refusing to prescribe any medicines. He bade her attendants put her to bed, declaring she would be well in the morning. The princess never forgave this neglect, and the young prince suffered in consequence.

His eleventh birthday was celebrated with a banquet and great rejoicings. The following day he complained of sickness, headache, and sore throat, and in the evening was delirious. The family physician sought to relieve him by bleeding, but did no good. There was a great outcry among the household that he would be lost if Dr. Radcliffe was not sent for. Accordingly the princess consented, and the great physician was prevailed upon to come. When he arrived at Windsor Castle and saw the poor little patient, he declared the malady scarlet fever, and demanded who had bled him. The physician in attendance owned he had been bled by his order. "Then," said Radcliffe, "you have destroyed him and you may finish him, for I will not prescribe."<sup>1</sup>

Only too truly was the prediction verified, and the young duke passed away on the 30th of July, to the great grief of all who knew him. He was the last remaining child of the seventeen the princess had had. His death caused great alarm to the nation, and

<sup>1</sup> Miss Strickland. "Anne."



JOHN RADCLIFFE, M.D.



Dr. Radcliffe was much blamed for making no effort to save his life.

Lord Marlborough was summoned from Althorpe to the sick-bed of his young charge, but only arrived in time to see him expire. The Princess Anne attended her son's last illness with great devotion, but with a resignation and composure astonishing all those about her. She remained at Windsor while the body of her child lay in state. On the 4th August the young prince's remains, escorted by the Earl of Marlborough and Mr. Sayers, were conveyed by torchlight to London, travelling through the Little Park and Old Windsor by Staines, arriving at Westminster at 2 A.M.

The body lay in state until the 11th, when, on the evening of that day, it was interred in the vault near Henry the Seventh's chapel.

On the death of her son, the princess's thoughts turned to her father. She poured out her whole heart to him in a letter, expressing her conviction that the sorrow she was experiencing was a just retribution for her conduct towards him. She also solemnly promised that she would use her utmost endeavours to effect the restoration of her brother if ever she came to the throne. Anne despatched this letter secretly to St. Germain's. Her correspondence with her father must, however, have reached William's ears and hardened his heart against her, for notwithstanding his former love for his little nephew, he took no steps to order the court into mourning, nor did he notice his death until October, when he wrote a stiff letter of condolence from Holland, and at the same time ordered the salaries of the duke's servants to cease. Lady Marlborough, says that by the contrivance of Lord Marlborough, and with Lord Albemarle's assistance, the servants received their salaries to the quarter-day after the duke died.

In September the princess was suffering from fever and dizziness; and probably requiring a change, she and Prince George visited Lord and Lady Marlborough at Holywell House, near St. Albans, on October 5. They stayed some days, for Marlborough had built on the outskirts of the town "a fair house at the west end of the borough near the river, where he has a fair garden, through which passes a stream where he keeps trouts and other fish for the convenience of his table."<sup>1</sup> The fish-ponds were filled up when the London and North-Western Railway was made, but the brook still flows on through the meadows.

From the arched verandah of the house the ruins of the distant nunnery of Sopwell could be seen, and rising behind Holywell is the fine old Abbey of St. Albans, with its handsome massive square tower and its many interesting features for those who can read history in stones and mortar. In Sarah's day it was a ruin, having been partly destroyed during the Reformation, Cromwell's Ironsides adding their share to the destruction.

The gardens were situated at the back and to the north of the house, the whole enclosed by a high wall, some portions of which still remain. A public road now runs through the demesne, and on the garden plot is the present football ground of the town. Only a few stones now mark the site of the once charming house of Holywell. It was a handsome building, and the favourite residence of the Marlboroughs before the construction of Blenheim. They do not appear to have lived at the old house at Sandridge, known as Water End House. It was used probably only as a farm. The distance from St. Albans, when roads were bad, may have been the reason they did not reside there.

<sup>1</sup> "History of Herefordshire," Cussons.



Two years previously Henrietta, the eldest daughter of Lord and Lady Marlborough, had married Lord Rialton, Lord Godolphin's only son. The bride was eighteen and the bridegroom twenty. He was not rich, so the match could hardly be described as brilliant, but on account of the friendship between the parents it was a very natural one, for Henrietta was fascinating as well as beautiful. Marlborough having a large family, and being anxious to leave his son sufficient to keep up his estate, could not afford to give his daughter more than £5000. The Princess of Denmark, in order to facilitate matters, generously came forward and presented the bride with a similar amount.

In the early part of the following year, and before the death of the Duke of Gloucester, Lord and Lady Marlborough married their second daughter, Anne, to Lord Spencer, the eldest son of the Earl and Countess of Sunderland. The match was first suggested by Lord Godolphin at Lord Sunderland's desire. Marlborough, although entertaining great friendship for the parents, was adverse to the marriage, as he disapproved of Lord Spencer's political views. Sarah, being a strong Whig, was more easily won over, and persuaded her husband to give his consent. Lord Spencer was a widower, his first wife, to whom he was devoted, being Lady Arabella Cavendish. He felt her death so intensely that for long he looked upon Lady Anne with indifference. However, at the express desire of Lady Sunderland, who was her godmother, she was much at Althorpe, and by degrees Lord Spencer was won by her beauty and the sweetness of her disposition. Lady Anne was then seventeen years old. Addison thus refers to her: "There is a brave soldier's daughter in town, that by her eye has been the death of more than ever her father made fly before him." The marriage took place at St. Albans, the princess

bestowing a dowry of £5000 upon the bride, her god-daughter, and Lord Marlborough adding as much more.

In course of time Prince George was appointed constable of the castle and ranger of the forest, in succession to the Duke of Norfolk, who had died. The Earl of Portland had been appointed inspector of all the gardens of William's many palaces, with an allowance of £70,000 a year for laying them out afresh. Portland, who had a genius for gardening, took up his residence at the chief lodge in Windsor Park, where he spent a large sum in improvements.

The Prince and Princess of Denmark for some time had owned a house formerly occupied by Nell Gwynne near the castle, and after Prince George's appointment, accompanied by Lady Marlborough, spent much time there. Riding and driving were their principal amusements. Anne had given up hunting, driving herself, instead, in a very high two-wheeled chaise. She is said to have driven her fine strong hackney forty miles in the day during the hottest weather in August. It was only in the time of George III. that hunting was changed to the winter season.

Prince George liked nothing so well as his horses and hunting, except perhaps his dinner. The author of "Windsor Forest" says, "In these tastes the husband and wife agreed very well." An allusion to their fondness for the pleasures of the table is found in a Jacobite song of the period, referring thus to the failings of the four royal personages—

"There's Mary the daughter, there's Willy the cheater,  
There's Geordie the drinker, there's Annie the eater."

Prince George having once complained to King Charles that he was growing fat, he replied, "Walk with

me and hunt with my brother, and you will not long be distressed with growing fat."

After being for some time in indifferent health, King James expired at St. Germain's on the 16th September 1701. Change of fortune had softened his character, and he had become affable and kind to his dependents. In his last illness he charged the Prince of Wales to sacrifice all worldly advantage rather than change his religion. It has been said of James, "Hunting was his diversion and religion his constant care."

William had made overtures to James to adopt the young Prince of Wales as his son, if he would embrace the Protestant religion. This offer was made probably to spite Princess Anne, but was declined. William was at table with some German princes and men of rank when the news was brought to Loo of James II.'s death, and the recognition by Louis of his son as King of England, Scotland, and Ireland. He uttered not a word, but reddened and pulled his hat over his eyes to hide his discomposed features. When he could command his voice, he issued orders that the *chargé d'affaires* who acted for the French ambassador should quit London, which he did in a few hours. This was a sign for renewed hostilities against France.

The court servants were ordered into mourning for James, but William intimated he did not expect his example to be followed by the nobility. However, this mark of respect was universally paid to the memory of the exiled king.

William received a dying message of forgiveness from King James, which had an intense effect upon him. Some say he had a dream in which James's spirit appeared to him, and reproached him for usurping his throne; also that William was never the same man afterwards. Be that as it may, he was taken seriously

little pleasure during his stay at Loo, but little was said of it. On his return to England, the King passed most of his time at Hampton Court, where he amused himself hunting, only going to Kensington Palace to hold his council.

Lord Marlborough was soon sent into Flanders to take command of the forces there, and for a short time Lady Marlborough joined him, returning to the prince within a month.

William amused himself at Hampton Court superintending excavations for a new canal, in imitation of those in his beloved country, when one day he met with an accident. The sorrel pony he was riding put his foot into a molehill and threw his master, who fractured his collar bone. The fracture was set before the King drove to Kensington, to which place he insisted on going, but the jolting of the carriage displaced the bone and it had to be reset. The pony had belonged to Sir John Denwick, and some said it was punishment on William for beheading the conspirator.

A fortnight after the accident he complained of his knee, which gave him great pain, but on the 6th March he was sufficiently recovered to take a few turns in his favourite gallery, where he had collected portraits of English admirals. The King, weary and depressed, seated himself at an open window looking on the private garden and fell asleep. His courtiers, dreading his fierce temper, dared not arouse him. They gathered in groups and watched his slumbers with anxiety. Lord Albemarle was away in Flanders, and his former friend Bentinck, was also absent; otherwise, having sacrificed his life to save that of his royal master, he would have heaved his displeasure and aroused him from his fatal slumber. William awoke shivering,





*King William III*  
*From the original painting by Veldevens at Welbeck Abbey*  
*the property of the Duke of Portland.*





and retired to his room, never again to arise from his sick-bed. The Earl of Albemarle arrived from Holland, and tried to talk affairs of state with him, but his only answer was, "*Je tire vers ma fin.*" The King expired on the 8th March. He was in his fifty-second year.

Scarcely had he breathed his last when Lords Lexington and Scarborough, who were in waiting, ordered the valet to untie from his left arm the bracelet of hair which had belonged to Queen Mary, and which William had desired to be buried with him. His body was embalmed, and lay in state for some time at Kensington Palace, and on April 12th was deposited in Henry VII.'s chapel in Westminster Abbey. William III. was of middle height, thin, of a delicate constitution, and had been a sufferer from asthma all his life. He had an aquiline nose, sparkling eyes, a large forehead, and a grave, solemn appearance. He was a man of great courage and fortitude, but of a cold nature. Burnet says he loved hunting beyond any man he ever knew, and disliked business of all sorts, as well as talking; that he was pleasant to the Dutch, and could not bring himself to be civil to the English. This is not, however, entirely the case, as we have a pretty picture of his affability in a letter Lady Rutland wrote to her husband in April 1701, describing a visit to the court at Kensington.<sup>1</sup>

She relates how the company, which included the Duchesses of Somerset, Ormonde, and Queensborough, Lady Arlington, Lady Barramore, Lord Feversham, Lord Romney, Lord Albemarle, and Mr. Bouchier, assembled in the gallery, where card-tables were arranged; how the King bowed to all on entry, and how they sat down to play with gold pieces. Lady Rutland

<sup>1</sup> Given in Appendix III., p. 363.

said, "The King called me, and told me he did not ask me to play because I refused it before, but asked if I never played at that or no other game at card. I told him I had played at Basset when the Queen was alive and commanded me, and it was a silver tassel, but a gold one was too deep for the ill luck I generally had." The King continued most gracious, and told Lady Rutland she looked "mighty well," and that, as he could not see Lord Rutland, who was in the country and out of health, he was pleased to see her. The sequel of this interview, so naively related to her lord, was that in February of the following year the King promised Lord Somers to create the Earl of Rutland a duke, but preferred to defer the announcement till his arrival in Holland, and thus avoid importunities from others.

The King's accident prevented his going abroad, and he died before carrying out his intention. The Earl of Rutland was one of the first peers to be raised in the next reign.

Marlborough was absent in Holland when William died, but Bentinck arrived in time to find him alive. The incident of William Bentinck having saved the life of the Prince of Orange happened when they were both boys. The prince was ill of the small-pox, and the pustules not freely rising, to promote the eruption a healthy boy was recommended to be placed with him in bed. Young Bentinck undertook this dangerous task, but he was infected and nearly lost his life. This act of devoted friendship endeared him to his master, while the esteem thus gained was further strengthened in later life by the prudence and ability shown by Bentinck.<sup>1</sup> William created him Earl of Portland, and granted him large estates, even the principality of Wales, but this

<sup>1</sup> Burnet.

grant was revoked by the House of Commons. For a long time the Earl of Portland continued William's first favourite, and was employed by him upon the most delicate embassies. During one of these at Paris he was shown, in the royal palace, Le Brun's series of paintings representing Louis XIV.'s victories, and was asked whether William's were to be seen in his residence. "No," replied Bentinck; "the monuments of my master's actions are to be seen everywhere but in his palace." Naturally reserved, ignorant of English customs and language, and looked upon with jealousy, Bentinck made enemies, who succeeded in supplanting him in William's regard in favour of Arnold von Keppel, afterwards Lord Albemarle. William always retained his affection for Bentinck, and when power of speech was gone, showed his attachment by clasping Bentinck's hand to his breast.

## CHAPTER VI

### UNDER QUEEN ANNE

(1702-1704)

"And lives to clutch the golden keys,  
To mould a mighty state's decrees,  
And shape the whisper of the throne."

No time was lost in proclaiming Anne queen. On the afternoon of the Sunday William died, the proclamation was read out at St. James's Palace, Temple Bar, and the Guildhall.

A general mourning was ordered by the Privy Council for the late king, Queen Anne attiring herself in purple to mark the difference, she being already in black for her father, James II.

Preparations were immediately begun for the coronation by the Court of Claims holding sittings to consider the procedure. "The Bishop of Durham put in his claim to support her Majesty at her right hand, and Champion Dymocke claimed, as queen's champion, a white horse with armoury and all accoutrements, also a gold cup and twenty yards of damask." The first claim was allowed, and the second referred to the Attorney-General.

On the day fixed for the coronation,<sup>1</sup> Anne was so disabled from gout that she had to be carried through the greater part of the ceremony. She was privately conveyed in a sedan chair from St. James's Palace at an early hour, and rested for a time in the court of the wards while preparations were going forward.

<sup>1</sup> April 23 (O.S.), 1702.



When the Queen entered Westminster Hall she wore a circlet of gold set with diamonds on her head; her train, passed through the back of the chair, was borne by the Duchess of Somerset, mistress of the robes, who was assisted by Lady Elizabeth Seymour, Lady Mary Hyde, Lady Mary Pierrepont, women of the bedchamber, and the lord chamberlain.

Prince George of Denmark, attended by state officials, preceded his royal consort. The procession went through the New Palace Yard, King Street, and along the Broad Sanctuary, entering the abbey by the west door. The spectators, railed off from the boarded way, received the Queen with great demonstrations of joy.

After taking the oath, the Queen, notwithstanding her infirmities, had to stand for the greater part of the remaining service. After being solemnly girt with the sword of Edward the Confessor, she offered it at the altar, where it was redeemed for £100. Her Majesty was next invested with the staff and ring. This ring, composed of a ruby engraved with the cross of St. George, was placed on the fourth finger of the Queen's right hand. Her Majesty being again seated, the dean produced the crown, which the archbishop took from his hands, placing it reverently on the Queen's head. At this auspicious moment trumpets sounded, guns from the Tower thundered out a salute, and the people shouted "God save the Queen!" The ceremony was concluded by prayers offered by the archbishop and the dean, which were joined in by the Queen and the rest of the assembly.

A banquet followed in Westminster Hall. The Queen sat at the centre table, with Prince George at her right hand; with her also were Lord and Lady Marlborough, the Duke and Duchess of Somerset, and

others; two other tables being likewise filled by more peers and peeresses. The Commons dined in the Exchequer Chamber, but on the conclusion of the repast were summoned to witness Champion Dymocke challenge the Queen's enemies. He rode into the hall and threw down the gauntlet, but no one appeared to dispute her Majesty's peaceable possession of the crown. The Queen then drank Dymocke's health out of a gold bowl, which he afterwards kept as his fee. This interesting and picturesque ceremony over, the Queen was carried back in her sedan chair to St. James's Palace, which she did not reach till after 8 P.M. The lord chamberlain, noticing the Queen's fatigue, suggested to the prince, who had been carousing with his friends, that her Majesty would be relieved if he proposed going to bed. "*I propose!*" said the prince jovially. "I cannot; I am her Majesty's subject, have done and sworn homage to her to-day. I shall do nought but what she commands me." "Then," replied Anne, laughing, "as that is the case and I am very tired, I do command you, George, to come to bed." The prince smilingly acquiesced.<sup>1</sup>

A few days later Anne left London for Windsor, while her apartments at St. James's were hung with black. Returning early in March, the Queen went to the House of Lords to open Parliament. The Earl of Marlborough carried the Sword of State, and the Countess of Marlborough accompanied her Majesty in the coach.

From the date of Anne's accession we can follow Sarah's life more closely than has been possible hitherto. A great change had come over our heroine's life; from being the bedchamber woman on sufferance to the heir presumptive, who was herself not in favour at court,

<sup>1</sup> Strickland.



Lady Marlborough became Groom of the Stole and Keeper of the Privy Purse to the sovereign.

Sarah was at once flattered and courted on all sides and by all parties, every one being aware of her influence over the new queen. This was enough to turn the head of most women, so it is not surprising that she became somewhat high and mighty. Circumstances change character. Anne, who had formerly hated ceremony, now became most punctilious; she could not, however, keep her favourite in order. During Anne's frequent fits of irresolution, Sarah, who from infancy had taken the lead, would flounce into her presence and quicken her Majesty's decision with the exclamation, "Lord, madam, it must be so!"

It is said that on one occasion Sarah banished, with one glance of her commanding eye, a Scottish gentleman, Mr. James Johnson, who came to Hampton Court to treat with the Queen. He probably came about Jacobean claims, but Sarah's attitude was so uncompromising, he saw his mission would fail, so retired. But with all her faults, Sarah was a faithful servant to Anne under all circumstances.

At the time of James's flight, who could have foreseen that the Princess Anne would one day become queen? Mary was still young, and her progeny would succeed before the Princess of Denmark. Yet when William and Mary tried to induce Sarah to fail in her allegiance to Anne, she persistently refused all overtures. A weaker woman would have yielded. This firmness of character was not likely to make her popular. A poem written about this time refers thus to Lady Marlborough—

"Deaf to all flattery, godlike to her friend,  
Blest with these virtues which will crown her end."

It is said a man may be judged by his friends. The character of those to whom Sarah gave her friendship, and the love and admiration they had for her, speak highly of her mental and moral qualities. A careful study of Sarah's character proves that she was a woman of strong principle, and that she loved what was good and hated what was evil. One point on which friends and enemies agree is that she had a violent temper. Lord Wolseley says, "Her temper prevented her from calmly discussing any subject, for she could not brook contradiction. In dealing with those around her she could not counterfeit indifference, nor would she suffer it from others. She was too open and downright, and too violent a hater to have any duplicity in her manner. She was free in conversation and cared little for what others thought of her opinions, firmly believing that she herself was always in the right. She was educated in a society where almost all were debased and corrupt, yet her virtue was above suspicion. She was a woman for whom education would have done much. It would doubtless have somewhat curbed her impetuous temper and taught her reason."<sup>1</sup>

There is a theory that the Jennings family descended from a Genoese merchant in the thirteenth century.<sup>2</sup> If this is taken into consideration along with the fact that an ancestress of Richard Jennings on the maternal side was an Italian lady named Frances Cavalery,<sup>3</sup> this southern strain of blood, however remote, might account for Sarah's hot temper. Her sparkling wit, vivacious manner, and great beauty might also be traced to the same source, while, on the other hand, her flaxen hair

<sup>1</sup> "Life of John, Duke of Marlborough."

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>3</sup> This lady's husband, Sir Robert Lytton, was Governor of Boulogne Castle in the sixteenth century.

rather suggests Saxon descent, of which it is quite possible she had a trace.

If Sarah had lived in another age, or had been given less freedom than Anne allowed her, she would have made fewer enemies and been a happier woman. It is true that "men make the times," but is it not also true that the times make the man? Her character and life may be illustrated by the following fable.

A beautiful rose-bush grew luxuriantly and untrammelled in a neglected garden; it put forth many buds and blossoms and thorny shoots. Woe betide the person who ventured to prune this shrub so long disregarded; they only got severe pricks and torn clothes for their pains. When this domineering plant surmounted the boundary wall, a cold blast, bringing a blight in its train, caused several branches to wither. The plant did not die altogether, but flourished for many years. But when its companions, the sturdy oak<sup>1</sup> and stately beech,<sup>2</sup> were laid low, it missed the shelter of their friendly branches and the warmth of their fallen leaves, and year by year fewer roses appeared; still the shrub was capable of putting forth many beautiful flowers.

Suppose that beautiful rose-bush with its wealth of sweet blossoms had lived in a cultivated garden, those thorny shoots would have been pruned long before they asserted themselves, the boundary would not have been passed, and the plant would have filled the garden with fragrance for many years.

We must now turn from the fascinating study of Sarah's complex character to the events of Queen Anne's court, so intimately blended with our heroine's life.

Envoys and ambassadors extraordinary arrived daily at St. James's during the months of March and April, to condole with the Queen on William's death and to

<sup>1</sup> Lord Godolphin.

<sup>2</sup> Her husband.



offer congratulations on her accession. The etiquette observed was first a private audience with the Queen, then another with Prince George, and finally a public reception at court. Representatives were sent from Zell, Hanover, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, and most of the German states.

In July the Queen went to Windsor and opened her court there with great magnificence. It was arranged that she should hold her councils at Hampton Court every Thursday, so that she could return to either Windsor or London the same day.

The Queen also determined to make a royal progress this summer on her way to Bath. Guards were sent on in advance to keep the roads through which she was to pass. Accompanied by Prince George, Anne stayed two or three days at Oxford, where they were well received. They also paid a visit to Cirencester, and from there to Badminton, where the Duke of Beaufort entertained her Majesty with great splendour. They proceeded the same evening to Bath. The mayor and corporation had specially invited the Queen, for they were most anxious to show her every honour and to efface the unpleasant recollections of her former visit, so the roads had been widened and somewhat levelled.

A procession met her on the borders of Somersetshire, consisting of a hundred young men in uniform and two hundred young women wearing green skirts and white bodices, carrying banners. They conducted the Queen and her train to the western gate of the town, where the mayor and corporation received her.

It is uncertain what house the Queen occupied, but some of her suite lodged over the western gate. The city became so crowded that many families had to retire to the villages, people having to pay eighteen shillings a night for a bed.

Bath now quickly became a fashionable resort ; numberless houses to be seen there at the present day date from Anne's reign.

The day began by ladies arriving in their sedan chairs to take the baths. They took them in public, dressed in "buckram" ; each lady being provided with a little basin to float in front of her in which to put her powder, patches, and snuff-box ; the husbands and admirers complimenting the bathers the while. The water is naturally warm, so they could remain some time in the bath. It is said that the custom of "toasting" originated at Bath. A famous beauty was bathing one day surrounded by several young gallants. They dipped their glasses in the water and drank her health. One of these, being rather the worse for drink, swore he did not like the liquor, but would get the "toast," and could hardly be restrained from jumping into the water after her. He referred to the practice of the day, of adding a piece of toast to the spiced wine or other beverage.

The Avon, flowing between green and wooded banks, lent itself to delightful water-parties ; a continual movement of sailing barges, whose occupants played on the French horn, then the vogue, enlivened the scene. The picturesque bridge with its burden of houses was reflected in the stream, and, surmounting all, the beautiful abbey, the most interesting feature of the place.

The fine peal of bells, still to be heard, were recast in 1700, from six to eight bells ; two more were added later. One of the bells bears this inscription :

" All you Bath that heare me sound,  
Thank Lady Hopton's hundred pound."<sup>1</sup>

During their stay at the gay watering-place, Prince George visited Bristol, where he met with an amusing

<sup>1</sup> Warner's "History of Bath."

adventure. Attended only by an officer, he went to see the Exchange, remaining there until nearly all the merchants had departed, except one, named John Duddlestone, who walked up to the prince and said, "Are you, sir, the husband of our good Queen Anne, as folk say you are?" The prince replied that he was. John Duddlestone then said that the merchants had been too bashful to offer hospitality to the prince, but that he would feel greatly honoured if his Royal Highness would return with him to dinner, and bring his soldier officer with him, if he had no objection to a piece of roast beef, a plum-pudding, and some home-brewed ale. Prince George was charmed with the unexpected invitation and readily accepted it, although he had ordered his dinner at the White Lion. On arriving at his house, Duddlestone called to his wife to put on a clean apron and to come down, "for the Queen's husband and a soldier gentleman had come to dine." Dame Duddlestone in a blue apron descended forthwith, and was, according to the custom of those days, "saluted" (that is, kissed) by Prince George on entering the parlour. In the course of dinner the prince asked his host if ever he went to London? Duddlestone replied, "that since the ladies had taken to wearing stays instead of bodices, he sometimes went to buy whalebone." On taking leave the prince invited him to bring his wife to court the next time he travelled, and gave him a card to admit him to Windsor Castle.

Some months later Duddlestone, requiring a new supply of whalebone, took his good lady behind him on his pack-horse and journeyed towards the capital. By the aid of the royal card they gained admittance to Windsor Castle, and Prince George presented them to the Queen. Thanking them for their hospitality to the prince, her Majesty invited them to dine with her,

promising to provide court dresses for the occasion if they would choose the material. They both selected purple velvet, such as the prince was then wearing. The costumes were made accordingly, and worn at the royal dinner-party, the proud wearers being introduced by the Queen herself "as the most loyal persons in the city of Bristol." After dinner her Majesty knighted John Duddlestone, and afterwards offered him a post under Government or a sum of money; but the honest citizen would accept of neither, "for," said he, "they wanted nothing, and had fifty pounds out at use, and he doubted from the number of people he saw about her Majesty's house that her living must be very expensive." The Queen, however, insisted on Lady Duddlestone accepting the gold watch she was then wearing. The worthy lady was justly proud of this signal favour, and always wore it outside her apron when attending Bristol market.<sup>1</sup>

Prince George's asthma was benefited by the course of Bath waters, but only for a time, as in October he was again attacked with his old complaint. His Highness was bled three times in forty-eight hours, and continued seriously ill for a month, but was eventually relieved by blisters. At the end of the year, Archduke Charles of Austria, candidate for the Spanish throne, came to England on his way to that country. He arrived at Windsor in the evening, and in order to light his way to the castle every other man of the guard of honour held a lighted flambeau in his hand. Details of his Highness's visit are told in a gossip letter of the period.<sup>2</sup> The Queen met her guest at the top of the stairs; he was wearing a blue coat trimmed with gold and silver galloon. He first "touched the bottom of her garment," and they exchanged kisses on the cheek. The archduke then led

<sup>1</sup> Miss Strickland.

<sup>2</sup> Rutland MSS.

the Queen to her chamber, and the prince attended the archduke to his.

On reassembling before supper the Queen presented him to all the ladies of the court, and he embraced each one. During the repast he sat at her Majesty's right hand, but was constantly leaving his seat and attending to the Queen and other ladies of the company. He ate little, and seemed greatly fatigued from his journey. In appearance the archduke was rather delicate-looking, had a handsome figure and moved gracefully, good eyes, white teeth, and a pleasant smile, with a somewhat melancholy expression.

The next morning about noon the Queen, attended by one lady, was about to visit her guest, when she met him half-way coming to her. Her Majesty accordingly led him back to his apartment, where she held a private conference with him, Prince George and the lady-in-waiting being left in the adjoining room. After this, Charles conducted Anne to the drawing-room and to dinner. The archduke, now wearing a crimson coat, had recovered from his fatigue and ate heartily. To Lady Fretchville, who was carving, he indicated with his fork the dishes he preferred. When the Queen drank her guest's health, they both rose, then reseated themselves, and Prince George, who was sitting at the head of the table, did likewise. During dessert, Charles, pointing to some candied orange-flowers, said something to the Queen, who stretched out her hand for the saucer and offered it to him, upon which he stood up to take it.

At the end of the repast it was the Duchess of Marlborough's office to present a basin of water to the Queen, for the royal hands to be dipped, after an ancient custom. The young archduke rose and offered to take the towel that the duchess had on her arm, but



she held it fast; however, he prevailed upon her to relinquish it. Dipping the towel in the water, he took one of the Queen's beautiful hands and washed her finger-tips and then his own. On returning the napkin to Lady Marlborough he pressed a fine diamond ring upon her finger and begged her to wear it. The ring Sarah received had been on Charles's own hand. Lady Fretchville, it was said, had expected it would have been given to her. She therefore scorned the cross of five brilliants presented to her, and afterwards gave it away. The two dressers received, one a ring and the other a diamond watch-chain. While at Dusseldorf, on his way to England, the prince had presented the Duke of Marlborough with his sword, remarking "that he had nothing worthier of his acceptance, for he was a poor prince who had little more than his sword and his mantle."

The remainder of the afternoon was spent in playing basset, listening to music, and dancing country-dances. Charles departed next day, accompanied by the Duke of Somerset, the prince being indisposed.

On January 5 the archduke sailed with the fleet under Sir George Rooke for Lisbon. After beating against contrary winds for fifteen days the fleet returned, and Charles was landed at Portsmouth more dead than alive. He remained at Petworth until February 6, when, the weather improving, he resailed and landed at Lisbon nine days later.<sup>1</sup>

The following month there were great rejoicings over the good tidings that success had attended our fleet and arms in Spain, where a combined force of Dutch and English had been sent to support Charles's claim to the Spanish throne. The news reached

<sup>1</sup> The archduke was proclaimed king at Barcelona, but did not long retain the throne of Spain. In 1711 he became Emperor of Austria, under the name of Charles VI.

London that several ships laden with treasure had been captured in Vigo harbour and others destroyed by the Duke of Ormonde.

The troops in Spain numbered 14,000 men, and were assisted by a large fleet under Sir George Rooke, but unfortunately differences had arisen between the English and Dutch commanders, and a month had elapsed without result of any kind until this capture.

November 12 was set apart as a day of thanksgiving for the recent victories, which also included those of the Earl of Marlborough in the Netherlands.

The Queen accordingly proceeded in state to St. Paul's. She wore her collar and George over a purple robe. Her coach, drawn by eight horses, contained the Countess of Marlborough and Lady Sunderland. Among other coaches that followed was that of the Duke of Ormonde, who had returned and was in waiting on her Majesty ; he was well received by the populace.

Shortly after this the Earl of Marlborough returned from his successful campaign, which had included the taking of Liege, and on December 10 the Queen sent a message to the Commons announcing that she had created Lord Marlborough a duke, and requesting that a suitable settlement should be made for him. There were debates on the subject and some opposition, but as this was the Queen's wish, Parliament agreed to settle £5000 a year upon him and his heirs out of the Post-Office revenues.

A great position was now thrust upon Sarah, who had no desire for such exalted rank without a sufficient income to keep up her new position. In those days, more than in our own, rank carried certain obligations with it, and this Lady Marlborough was shrewd enough to see. This elevation was important to Marlborough, as it carried weight with the allies, or to quote a private

letter of the period, "Her (the Queen's) favour and his successes together gave him his title to it; it gives credit abroad where he is to serve."

A short time before, the Marlboroughs had married their third daughter, Elizabeth, to Scroop Egerton, fourth Earl of Bridgewater, who was Master of the Horse to Prince George of Denmark; he was afterwards created Duke of Bridgewater by George I. Of exquisite beauty of mind and body, Lady Elizabeth was lively and accomplished, and admired and loved by all who knew her. Born on March 15, 1687, she was only fifteen when she married, and shortly after she was appointed a lady of the bedchamber to the Queen. Her youngest sister, Mary, considered the most lovely of all that good-looking family, had already been appointed a lady-in-waiting in place of Lady Charlotte Beverwaret, who had died.

The Duke and Duchess of Marlborough's eldest son, Lord Blandford, was a youth of great promise, having high principles, charming manners, and good abilities. He was educated at Eton; and his father had hoped that Anne would have appointed him Master of the Horse to the Duke of Gloucester, but the premature death of the prince put an end to the project. Lord Blandford was afterwards sent to King's College, Cambridge, under the tuition of Mr. Hare. It was here he formed a friendship with Horace Walpole the elder, afterwards the famous diplomat. The ambition of the two young men was to serve under the command of the Duke of Marlborough, and Lord Blandford was scarcely sixteen when he begged to join his father in the Netherlands. His mother refused her consent, on account of his youth and for fear of his safety. But this solicitude on her part was of little avail. Fate had decreed that he would die young. In the summer of

1703 small-pox was raging at Cambridge. Lord Godolphin, who lived in the neighbourhood, took particular care to keep Sarah informed of her son's state of health. Knowing her anxiety, he wrote in August as follows: "I repeat to you that I find Lord Churchill very lean. He is very tractable and good-humoured, but without any one inclination that I can perceive," &c. In October Lord Godolphin invited the young man to stay with him at Newmarket, where small-pox was also prevailing, but it was hoped, by taking proper precautions, to avert the risk of infection. Sarah, however, went through terrible anxiety on her son's account. "What you write," said Lord Godolphin in a letter to her, "is extremely just and reasonable, and though the small-pox has been in the town, yet he, going into no house but mine, will, I hope, be more defended from it by air and riding without violent exercise than he could probably be anywhere else."

A few days later he again writes to tell the anxious mother his opinion of her son: "Your pretty son, whom I have just now parted from and whom I assure you, without flattery or partiality, that he is not only the best natured and most agreeable but the most free-thinking and reasonable creature that one can imagine for his age. He has twenty pretty questions and requests, but I will not trouble you with particulars till I have the honour of seeing you." This letter gave Sarah intense pleasure. In the beginning of January, however, notwithstanding all precautions, her beloved son was attacked by a malignant form of this terrible disorder.

The Duchess, as she had now become, hurried to Cambridge to find her boy in great danger. She sent to London for a skilled physician, and the Queen most feelingly sent Dr. Haines and Dr. Coladon in one of the royal carriages from Windsor. The skill of these



gentlemen and the devoted nursing of his mother prolonged the boy's life, but his strength was not sufficient to bear up under the disease, although he made a great struggle with death.

Sarah sent frequent expresses to inform her husband of the progress of the malady, for Marlborough was suffering intense anxiety. He wrote to his wife, "I am so troubled at the sad condition this poor child seems to be in that I know not what to do. I pray God to give you some comfort in this great affliction. If you think anything under heaven can be done, pray let me know of it, or if you think my coming can be of the least use, let me know it. I beg I may hear as soon as possible, for I have no thought but what is at Cambridge." He adds, "Before despatching the letter I writ to you this morning, and was in hopes I should have heard again before this time, for I hope the doctors were with you early this morning. If we must be so unhappy as to lose this poor child, I pray God to enable us both to behave ourselves with that resignation which we ought to do. If this uneasiness which I now lie under should last long, I think I could not live. For God's sake, if there be any hope of recovery let me know of it."

Within a few hours the unhappy father followed this letter to Cambridge, but arrived only in time to see his son expire on the morning of Saturday, February 20, 1703-4. Lord Blandford was interred in King's College Chapel, where a Latin inscription to his memory may be read.

In Sir Godfrey Kneller's portrait he appears of medium height, has large, expressive eyes and full lips, resembling his mother more than his father. Marlborough felt his son's death most keenly. He wrote to Lord Godolphin from abroad, where he had to hasten almost immediately, that his son was never out of his thoughts.



A private letter of the period, written by Lady Pye to Abigail Harley at Brampton, reads :—

“We hear the Duchess of Marlborough bears not her affliction like her mistress, if report be true that it hath near touched her head.”

The devoted mother's intense sorrow and grief shows that Sarah had considerably more heart than her detractors would have us believe. The duchess's duties required her presence at St. James's, but her health most certainly failed at this time through all she had suffered. In her longing for seclusion, she used to spend hours in the cloisters at Westminster, dressed in the deepest mourning. The second Duke of Portland said that when a boy he saw her there grieving over her son.

In a letter dated St. James's, March 17, 1703-4, to the Earl of Tullibardine on some matter of business or favour she was to obtain for him from the Queen, the duchess expresses herself as “most happy to be of the least service,” and condoles with him on some family bereavement he had sustained, continuing, “but this is of a sort that you had reason to expect, which ought to moderate your affliction, but I have been so unfortunate as to lose an only son with all the appearance of health and strength, at sixteen years old, with all the qualities that I could pray for. There is but one stroke of fortune that can be more severe ; after naming it I can say no more.” Probably the duchess here refers to the possibility of the duke's death.

## CHAPTER VII

### UNDER QUEEN ANNE

(1704-1708)

"Good actions crown themselves with lasting bays,  
Who well deserves needs not another's praise."

—HEATH.

It was Sarah's fortune that her passionate nature should experience every emotion. To intense grief, succeeded gnawing anxiety, to be followed and crowned with joy and pride.

During the summer of 1704 apprehension was felt by all, and more especially by his wife, for the success of the Duke of Marlborough's campaign. The news arrived that Louis XIV. had sent the renowned Marshal Tallard with a large force to aid the Elector of Bavaria, the declared enemy of the allies.

The road being now open, it was feared Vienna would be captured and the war brought to an abrupt and unhappy conclusion. The Duke of Marlborough resolved to inflict a telling blow. He succeeded in joining forces with Prince Eugene, and on 12th August discovered the enemy, who greatly outnumbered his army, preparing a camp between Blenheim and Lutzingen, and on the 23rd, in spite of the difficulty of a swampy country and a river with muddy banks, Marlborough led his troops to the attack, and with great skill won the now famous battle of Blenheim.

Although greatly fatigued after sixteen hours in the

saddle, he immediately wrote the following letter to his wife :<sup>1</sup>—

“I have not time to say any more than to beg of you to present my humble duty to the Queen, and to let her know that her army has had a glorious victory. Monsieur Tallard and two other generals are in my coach, and I am following the rest. The bearer, my aide-de-camp, Colonel Pack, will give her Majesty an account of what has passed. I shall do it in a day or two by another mode more at large. . . .

“MARLBOROUGH.”

Our loss in the battle was 12,000 killed and wounded, the French losing 40,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners. Over a hundred standards and colours were taken from the enemy.

Queen Anne was sitting in a small turretted chamber overlooking Windsor Park when the Duchess of Marlborough announced the good news. Her Majesty at once desired to see Colonel Pack, and he was introduced in his travel-stained clothes, having ridden straight from the battlefield, night and day, to cover the distance in as short a time as possible.

The Queen offered to reward him handsomely, but he begged her Majesty would give him her portrait instead of money. Accordingly, in a few days the Queen presented him with her miniature set in diamonds.

Evelyn says : “On 7th September was celebrated the thanksgiving for the late victory of Blenheim ; it was conducted with the utmost pomp and splendour, the Queen, the Court, Great Officers of State, and the Lord Mayor attended. The streets were scaffolded from Temple Bar, where the Lord Mayor presented the Queen with a sword, which she returned. The

<sup>1</sup> Dumont, “History of the Duke of Marlborough.”

Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, and Aldermen in scarlet robes with caparisoned horses, the Knight-Marshal on horseback, the Footguards, the Queen in a coach drawn by eight horses, none with her but the Duchess of Marlborough in a very plain garment, the Queen full of jewels."

A letter written in the Emperor Leopold's own hand, acknowledging that the Duke of Marlborough had saved the empire, was ordered by the Queen to be preserved among the records of the Tower. In this letter the Emperor gave the duke the title of Highness; her Majesty took the hint, and kindly sent to tell Marlborough that he might accept any honour the Emperor was pleased to bestow upon him. In a little while the news arrived that the Emperor had conferred the title of Prince of the Empire upon the duke.

On the 14th September Marlborough returned to England. Leaving Marshal Tallard and fifteen other French officers on board the yacht *Catherine* to await the Queen's pleasure, he went to St. James's, and was received there with every mark of honour. Her Majesty presented him with a "George" set in diamonds, worth £8000. On the same day a vote of thanks was passed by both Houses of Parliament.

At the invitation of the civic authorities, the duke and sixty other noblemen attended a banquet given in his honour. They were met at Temple Bar by the City Marshal, and conducted in state to the Goldsmiths' Hall; the Queen's band playing during the repast, which cost £800. Marshal Tallard and some other of the French prisoners were sent down to Nottingham; they were well treated, and allowed considerable liberty. On his way to his destination a butcher came up to Tallard and said, "You are welcome into England; I hope to see your master here next year."

Vice-Chamberlain Coke sent the marshal a present of wine, with the wish that it might be acceptable, although it could not compare with the wine of his native land.

Early in January the Commons presented an address to the Queen, expressing a wish that her Majesty would consider some permanent means of commemorating the Duke of Marlborough's services. In a few days the Queen signified her pleasure that the royal park and manor of Woodstock should be settled upon the duke and his heirs, and that it should be cleared first of all encumbrances. The Bill was accordingly passed.

The name of Woodstock is associated with romance from the days of Henry II. and Fair Rosamond, in the twelfth century, to the less remote period of Cavaliers and Roundheads in the seventeenth century. Sir Walter Scott has immortalised Woodstock in the Waverley Novels with a tale of those stirring times. The manor, built by Henry I. amidst a large forest, was improved by divers kings of England, who resided there from time to time for the chase.

Fair Rosamond was the daughter of Walter, Lord Clifford. Her story is well known, and how by a silken thread the place of her concealment was discovered by Queen Eleanor. The tale savours of mediæval times, when one reads that she was forced to drink a cup of poison by the enraged Queen. Another story tells us that Fair Rosamond was immured in a convent, and died in sanctity; but the former version is the one most popular.

A spring, known to this day as "Fair Rosamond's Well," rises close to the lake; the ground immediately surrounding the spring is paved with stone, while steps lead down to the spot. It is supposed that underground



passages existed at one time from the well to the palace or manor of Woodstock, which stood on rising ground. The gatehouse and outbuildings were erected by Henry VII. Queen Elizabeth, as princess, was imprisoned here for a year by her sister, Queen Mary; she arrived in May 1554, only to find the building in a ruinous condition, with hardly a lock to any of the doors. The room the princess occupied had an arched roof of Irish oak, curiously carved and decorated in blue and gold; it was situated over the gate of the palace.

The Commissioners of the Commonwealth were ordered to demolish Woodstock Manor, but its destruction was interrupted by supernatural means, so the credulous workmen thought better of it, and departed with their work only half accomplished.

The fellow who frightened them away with his tricks was a disguised Royalist called "Trusty Joe," formerly a keeper of the park, who took service with the Commissioners on purpose to persecute them, and prevent them from carrying out their design. James II. visited the palace of Woodstock during his royal progress through the country, and dined there in great state in September 1687.

The King was then on his way to Oxford, and it was on this occasion he gave so much offence to the University by insisting on the election of a president for Magdalene College, contrary to the wishes of the Fellows, and against all precedent—one of the injudicious measures that brought James into disfavour with his people.

The partly-ruined manor of Woodstock and surrounding Crown land were now granted to the Duke of Marlborough, in recognition of his services to the nation. A sum of money was accordingly voted by Parliament to build the duke a palace, on a site to be

selected in Woodstock Park. Sir John Vambrugh was chosen as architect.

Several changes had lately been made both about the court and the Government. In April Mr. Robert Harley was made Speaker of the House of Commons, and in the following month he was declared Secretary of State—this last appointment was through the interest of the Duke of Marlborough and Lord Godolphin, who thought they could depend upon him. His letters to both duke and duchess breathe a devotion he was far from feeling, and in the sequel he proved himself insincere. From this date he began secretly intriguing to get the Queen into his power, through the instrumentality of his cousin, Abigail Hill, of whom more will be told in another chapter.

But at this time the Queen could not sufficiently honour Lord and Lady Marlborough. On the birth of Sarah's first grandson, her Majesty offered herself as godmother, the ceremony taking place at St. James's Chapel. This infant, named William, was the child of Henrietta; the grandfather, Lord Godolphin, and Lord Sunderland were his godfathers.

About this time Lady Mary Churchill, the youngest of the duke's daughters, was married to Lord Montthermer, eldest son of the Earl of Montague. Lady Mary had had many admirers; when only sixteen, Lord Peterborough's son had proposed for her, but her father refused his consent on account of the dissolute character the young man bore. Lord Huntington, son of Lord Cromarty, had also wished to marry her. It is said Marlborough had political reasons for giving his daughter to a Montague, namely, as a means of reconciliation between the Whigs and Tories. He feared that during his absence abroad they might combine to ruin him. The Queen gave Lady Mary a great quantity of gold

plate upon her marriage, and Lord Monthermer was granted the reversion at his father's death of the post of Master of the Wardrobe, worth £3000 a year.

Very shortly after his daughter's marriage the Duke of Marlborough embarked for Holland. He left London in one of the Queen's carriages, the duchess accompanying him as far as Harwich.

The duke kept up an intimate correspondence with his wife during his campaigns, and these letters she treasured all her life, and read and re-read after his death. It is a pity that her letters to him were not preserved, for they might have revealed some of the inner workings of her heart and mind. One gathers sometimes from his replies that she spoke out her mind too freely, or did not respond always as he wished. She made him promise to destroy all her letters, and this promise he kept faithfully. She knew her own habit "of tumbling out her mind" just as things came into her head, and in the vicissitudes of camp life she was afraid the correspondence might be seen by other eyes than those they were intended for.

The duke appears to have taken his wife thoroughly into his confidence, and to rely on her judgment and opinion on matters of business and politics.

"MELDERT, *August 1705.*

"The hint I have had from 72 (Lord Godolphin) concerning 79 (the Queen) shall make me more cautious for the future, for I should be glad to do good, and consequently would do no hurt. But by the humours and factions that govern in all parts, I do not find the war like to end so soon as we might expect, by which we are to be punished for our sins.

"I pray God with all my heart that He may at last forgive us, and let us have a good and lasting peace.

I wash my eyes very often with fair water and a sponge, but they are still very weak, and I am afraid will continue so till this campaign be over, and that I can have some rest, which I long for more earnestly than ever I did in my life. I have received yours of the 24th July, and am very impatient for the arrival of Deveralle, you having given me hopes of a long letter by him; for, though we differ sometimes in our opinions, I have nothing here gives me so much pleasure as your letter, and, believe me, my dearest soul, if I had all the applause, and even the whole world given me, I would not be happy if I had not your esteem and love."

What wife would not be proud to receive such a letter, so full of confidence and love? There can be no doubt that Sarah passionately loved her devoted husband. She gloried in his skill as a general, had the greatest admiration for his many gifts, and did everything in her power politically to strengthen his hands.

In the autumn of 1705 she was much occupied over an election at St. Albans. Her candidate, Admiral Killigrew, was elected; but disputes arose, and the matter was referred to a committee of privilege, who found not only that the admiral was duly elected, but that no "ill practice" could be attributed to the Duchess of Marlborough, although bribing was common enough in those days.

It was the duke's custom to return to England when his troops went into winter quarters, then early in the spring he would re-embark for Holland. He wrote to his wife from the Hague on April 16, 1706:—

"After two very troublesome nights I got to this place, where I received the enclosed letter, which I desire you to give 117 (Sunderland), that he may show



it to those persons that were acquainted with my letter, this being an answer to it to 91 (Godolphin), that letter has given me some trouble as well as my sending (away) 136 (Cadogan) at a time in which he is so useful to me. I desire you would speak to 91 that he would show these letters to 117. I am sure my dearest soul will be so just and kind to me as to believe that the greatest support I have in these troubles are that at last I shall be rewarded with the blessing of living quiet with her which my heart longs for."<sup>1</sup>

A few days before the battle of Ramilies the duke wrote from Merlbeck, near Ghent, referring to some unfortunate differences Sarah had had with her children:—

"I am obliged to you for your kind letter of the 10th, and do hope your children will every day be more sensible of your goodness and kindness, and so that you may be all happy, which is what I do with all my heart pray for. It is now four days ago since I sent for a pass for Lord Monthermer (his son-in-law) to come to the army, but the Mareschal de Villeroi is either very much out of humour or in so great a hurry that he has not yet sent them. I am the uneasier at this because I think the young man is very desirous of returning to England, as would your humble servant if he were master of himself.

"I own to you the pains I now take I do very cheerfully, believing that this campaign, if the blessing of God continues, will go a great way towards the having a happy and a long peace."

Lord Monthermer, with Lord Halifax, had accompanied Marlborough from England. They were both

<sup>1</sup> "Private Correspondence."



present at the siege of Menin. Lord Monthermer quickly tired of the life, and wished to return home, saying he could have no happiness while he stayed abroad. Marlborough, writing to the duchess, says: "I own to you that I did not disapprove of what he said, but my answer was that I desired he would consult Lord Halifax, and take care not to anger his father."

In another letter he again refers to the family disagreements: "It is very mortifying to see that nothing can amend 392 (Lady Monthermer). I beg of you to do me the justice to believe that whatever they say can have no credit with me when you assure me to the contrary. I can and do grieve as much as any parent can when a child is unkind. We must hope the best, and be always careful not to resent their carriage to such a degree as to make the town the judge who is in the right."

The reason of Lady Monthermer's estrangement from her mother does not appear; it might be the duchess was too outspoken over Lord Monthermer's desire to quit so soon the army in the field, but this is only surmise.

At the battle of Ramillies, on May 23, the duke had a very narrow escape. While leaping a wide ditch his horse was shot under him, and Marlborough fell violently to the ground. His aide-de-camp, Captain Molesworth, instantly offered him another charger. Colonel Bringfield, the duke's equerry, helped him to mount the animal, and in doing so fell back dead, a cannon-ball taking his head clean off. This thrilling scene is depicted on the walls of Marlborough House.

There were great rejoicings in London when the news of the victory arrived; bells were rung, and bonfires lighted.

Directly the duchess heard of the duke's miraculous

escape, she paid a visit of condolence to Colonel Bringfield's widow, promising her from the Queen a pension for life. It was a touching interview, Sarah being deeply moved by the sorrow of one whose husband had sacrificed his life in helping her "dear lord."

The anxiety and thrilling sensations Sarah experienced during this campaign told upon her health. Early in June it was reported she had had an apoplectic fit. However, she soon recovered, for on June 27 Sarah was well enough to attend the thanksgiving service for her husband's latest triumph. She and the Countess of Burlington accompanied the Queen in her coach, which was escorted by Horse and Foot Guards in new uniforms. Prince George was unable to endure the fatigue of so long a day, a start being made from the palace at 9 A.M. The foreign ambassadors, and a larger number of the nobility than had ever been known, attended, probably on account of the duke's narrow escape from death. The streets were lined with the trained bands and city companies, who wore their livery gowns.<sup>1</sup>

At Temple Bar the Queen was met by the Lord Mayor and sheriffs on horseback, who conducted her to St. Paul's, where an anthem was sung, the sermon being preached by the Dean of Canterbury. A salute was fired from the Tower, and at night there were bonfires and illuminations.

Marlborough was much concerned to hear of his wife's indisposition, and refers to it in his letters. He also took an immense interest in the progress of the building at Woodstock, and in one letter says:—

"By your saying nothing to me of your going to Woodstock, I find your heart is not set on that place as I could wish. Vanbrugh writes me that I shall not see

<sup>1</sup> Luttrell.

him in the army, believing that I shall approve better of his going into Oxfordshire."

To please the duke, no doubt, the duchess went to Woodstock in September, and attended the races there, the duke having given a plate to be run for. She stayed on a week, superintending the building of the palace.

In November he writes from Ghilighen :—

"I know not whether this will find you at Woodstock or London. If at the last, I should be glad you would let me know what effect my last letter has had on 83 (the Queen), for I wish so well that I am in the greatest impatience imaginable to know her resolution, which I pray God may be such as may make her happy, and be with you, my dearest soul, - then nothing can make me unhappy, for I have not a desire of being richer, nor any further ambition than that of ending my days quietly with you when the war shall happily be ended. We have now two posts due from England. I do not expect the happiness of receiving them till I come to the Hague, from whence my next letters will be dated." <sup>1</sup>

Towards the end of the month the duke returned to England, bringing with him a very important treaty, in which the States General undertook, if called upon, to support the next Protestant successor to the crown of England.

The House of Lords returned thanks to Marlborough for his services, and on the afternoon of the 19th December twenty-six standards and sixty-three colours, taken at the battle of Ramillies, were carried in great state from St. James's to the Guildhall, to be hung up there. They were escorted by three troops of Horse

<sup>1</sup> "Private Correspondence," vol. i. Published 1838.

Guards and a battalion of foot. Both Houses of Parliament attended the second ceremony of thanksgiving at St. Paul's, the Duchess of Marlborough accompanying the Queen in her coach.

Three months later the duke again started for Holland. The duchess went with him as far as Margate, but contrary winds delayed his departure till the 2nd of April. The duchess suffered anxiety on her husband's account, knowing the misery he would experience, being a bad sailor.

The duke wrote a few days later from the Hague :—

*"April 9, 1707.*

"I did write to my dearest soul as soon as I was landed to let her know of my being safe. Since my arrival we have had no letters from England, so that if I had stayed for a fair wind I must have been now at Margate. I begin my journey for Saxony this afternoon, so that you will not receive any letters for these next three weeks so regularly as you shall be sure to do afterwards. I do undertake this journey in hopes the public may reap some good by it, otherways I foresee a great deal of trouble to myself in it. I have given orders that all your letters after Friday's post should be kept here for fear they should be lost upon the road. The Muscovite ambassadrice depends very much upon your acquaintance and friendship, so that you must make her some compliments when she comes to London. I desire you will let Lord Sunderland know that he will see by mine to Lord Treasurer and Mr. Secretary all that I can write at this time, so that he shall not hear from me till I have seen the King of Sweden, which I hope to do to-morrow. Every hour of my life I wish for Woodstock being finished and my being happily there with you."

Another interesting letter of the duke's is inserted. It is written from Soignies on May 15/20, 1707 :—

“Since I left my dear soul till now I have never had any time to myself; though I am forced to be much on horseback, yet I have the satisfaction of being some time every day alone in my chamber; and if I could be blessed with your company at that time, it would make amends for the other uneasy part of my life, for my misfortune here is that unless it be in what concerns the war I have nobody to whom I can speak without reserve. The character you have given me of 221 is but too true, so that I shall be upon my guard as much as is possible, but my unhappiness is that I am forced to converse with great numbers amongst which there is not one in a hundred of such a temper as I could wish a friend should be. I have had a very obliging letter from 245.<sup>1</sup> I do not send it unless you desire it, since the hand is so ill that it would hurt your eyes; by it I believe she is to meet her husband on this side of the water. Cadogan by some negligence has had his quarters burnt, but I do not yet know what his loss is; the church and the greater part of the village was burnt, the fire burnt the outhouses of my quarters, but my servants had time enough to take out the horses, so that I lost nothing. . . . I am heart and soul yours.”<sup>2</sup>

A month later the duke again writes :—

“June 26, 1707.

“. . . . The post is not to go till to-morrow and I hope to have the happiness of hearing from you before that time, yet I would not lose this hour which I have to myself of assuring you that you are always in my

<sup>1</sup> Supposed to be Lady Tyrconnel.

<sup>2</sup> Cox MSS., vol. xli.



thoughts, and if it were not for the happiness I propose to myself of having some part of the remainder of my life of living quietly with you I could not have with patience the trouble I struggle with at this time. The weather is very hot and the dust is so very great that I have this hour to myself, the officers not caring to be abroad till the hour of orders obliges them to it. It is most certain that when I was in Spain in the month of August I was not more sensible of the heat than I am at this minute. If you have the same weather, it must make all sorts of fruit very good, and as this is the third year of the trees at Woodstock, if possible, I should wish that you might, or somebody you can relie on, to taste the fruit of every tree, so that what is not good might be changed. On this matter you must advise with Mr. Wise, as also what place may be proper for the ice-house, for that should be built this summer, so that it might have time to dry. The hot weather makes me think of these things, for the most agreeable of all the presents I receive is that of Ice. I expect every day to hear of three looking-glasses I have bought in Paris, that has cost 300 pistoles, of their being come to Bruxelles as I shall send them to England or keep them here till the winter as you shall direct. . . . I am glad to hear that 28 (Duke of Shrewsbury) is easier than the last year. I do not think he can ever be of much use, but it is much better to have mankind pleased than angry, for a great many that can do no good have power to do harm."

In May, during the duke's absence abroad, there was a great pageant in the streets of London; the Venetian ambassador made his public entry. The procession consisted of two coaches with eight horses and eight coaches with six horses, the harness decorated with ribbons.

after the duke. The figurehead represented him on horseback, with Count Tallard under the animal's heels. Subsequently this vessel experienced as many fights at sea as the duke had done on shore. The duchess, always gratified at any honour paid to her husband, attended this ceremony.

The Duke of Marlborough and other officers left London at 3 A.M. on the 29th March for Margate, on their way to Holland. The duke wrote from the Hague on 19th April 1708:—

“ . . . I am not in despair of having time enough to be with you for a week or ten days, but shall be able to judge of this when I shall be fully informed of what the French offer. All that I can assure you is that I have so much mind to come to you that I shall not value the being twice sick at sea, and the uneasy solicitations I must undergoe during the time of my being in England.”

On 27th April he writes:—

“The English post came in this morning, by which I was in hopes to have heard from you, but I had no letters; as I thought I should have returned to England I omitted telling you that I am advised by everybody to have the Portico (at Blenheim) so that I have writ to Vanbrugh to have it, and which I hope you will like, for I should be glad we were always of one mind, which shall always be my endeavour, for I am never so happy as when you are kind.”

To return to events in London, one of which created a sensation that might have led to disastrous consequences. The occasion was this. The Russian ambassador was about to leave England, and before quitting was careful to pay all his debts, but he had overlooked a sum under £100 owing to a tradesman. He discovered this

before setting out on his journey, and made arrangements for the bill to be settled. His creditor, hearing of the ambassador's departure and not knowing he intended to pay, secured two bailiffs to arrest the Russian envoy on his leaving the Embassy—a very high-handed proceeding on the part of a private individual.

Mr. Boyle gives the following account in a letter to the Duke of Marlborough, dated 23rd July :—

“The Muscovite ambassador was arrested and taken out of his coach by bailiffs ; this is, I believe, an outrage without precedent, and yet I doubt not our law will admit a reparative equal to the offence. . . . I find him in a better temper than I should have imagined upon such an occasion, at the same time our Russian merchants are very apprehensive of the consequence of this affront.”<sup>1</sup>

Four days later Mr. Boyle writes :—

“Last Sunday, by order of the Queen in council, the bailiff, three attorneys, and three of the creditors were committed to the custody of a messenger for being concerned in taking the Muscovite ambassador. I waited upon him this morning, by the Queen's order, to acquaint him with the concern her Majesty is in at the indignity put upon him, and to assure him that he shall have all possible reparation. He says he will acquaint his master of it, but at the same time desires a passport to go to Holland with the Dutch envoy that is to sail next Saturday. He refused to take with him his re-credentials or to accept of any present, and has hired a private vessel because he will not go over in the (royal) yacht.”

A few days later Mr. Boyle writes that two more persons had been arrested, and that he had informed the ambassador that the Queen intended sending some

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Marlborough MSS.

person of distinction to the Czar, probably Lord Carmarthen ; with this assurance the ambassador appeared satisfied. However, in November it was reported to Mr. Boyle that the ambassador had greatly exaggerated the affront put upon him ; and one satisfaction demanded, amongst others, was that the bailiffs should be put to death !

A short time after this the Earl of Manchester, returning from Venice, exchanged courtesies at the Hague with the "Muscovite" ambassador, so it may be surmised that the affair blew over without more trouble.

This Earl of Manchester entertained a sincere friendship for Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. During his embassy at Venice he had corresponded largely with her on the subject of silks and damasks, which he took infinite pains to choose for her.

The duchess was then occupied with the vast undertaking of furnishing her palace at Woodstock. Some of his letters are most interesting. He sent some one to Genoa at Sarah's request to obtain information on the subject, and found to his surprise no material ready made, but any quantity to order, though, if new designs were made, more had to be paid for setting up the loom. He writes :—

"If I might advise your Grace, I think the best way would be to have the several colours painted on paper, with the breadth and quantity specified to each room, and whatever you will have figured the whole design must be sent, as is always done, and then it will be made exactly to your mind."

He advised ascertaining in England the price paid by merchants at Genoa, and not to give more, and recommended it being put on board the men-of-war to save the duty and insurance. In conclusion he adds,

"I should think myself extremely happy could I contribute anything that might be for your Grace's service having that ambition, and shall with pleasure receive your commands." In another letter, "I think myself extremely happy that I can any ways demonstrate to your Grace the sincere zeal I shall ever have for your service, and it is a real pleasure to me to be employed on all such occasions."

Sarah approved of some patterns of yellow and green damask that he sent her, and later ordered sufficient to make chair-covers and window and door curtains all *en suite*, after the Italian fashion, as recommended by Lord Manchester, who asked for the height of the rooms; for if the damask had to be joined, there would be much waste to match the pattern.

Finding he could have the material made as well at Venice as at Genoa, Lord Manchester preferred to employ local workmen, who were poor, rather than those at a distance. He wrote: "The goodness of the velvets depends on the quantity of ounces of silk; and one cannot be deceived, as every piece is weighed, and so there must be that number of ounces as is agreed on."

The duchess replies:—

"5th August 1708.

"I have received your lordship's of the 27th July, for which I give you a thousand thanks. This is all I can do; but Lord Marlborough, I hope, will return your goodness to him by a success that I hope will bring such a peace as you and your family may always be the better for. . . . The last post I troubled your lordship with particular directions about the damasks and velvets, but I forgot these two patterns which I said then I would enclose. I give your lordship many thanks for your goodnes in offering me the velvets you had directed (intended) for yourself, but you will find



by my last letter that my inclination is to silks of one colour. I wish I could do anything for your service here."

Then on 10th August the duchess writes:—

"I have received the honour of your Lordship's letter, with the patterns and directions how to proceed in that affair, which are so exact that it is my fault if there ever happens any mistake. I will keep them very carefully by me till Lord Marlborough takes a resolution to furnish Woodstock, and I am sure whenever he begins that work your papers will be of great use to him. I wish I may ever be of any to you."

A little later Sarah, writing from Windsor Castle, thanks Lord Manchester for his goodness in taking so much trouble for her; hopes she may have an opportunity of returning the favours she had received from him; begs he will kindly order for her several lengths of green, yellow, blue, and scarlet damask, plain blue and plain scarlet velvet, also scarlet and blue satin.

The duchess writes:—

"Your Lordship says scarlet is the more difficult, and seems to think they do not dye that so well as we do; but I think that what you sent me was the most beautiful colour I ever saw, and I like it better for a bed than crimson, being less common, as well as much handsomer. . . . The figured velvets of general colours are not much liked, though the fashion; but I should like mightily scarlet-figured velvet, without any mixture of colours, and blue and green of the same; and when your Lordship has the opportunity, I should be glad to see a pattern of them, but of that there is no haste."

In all, the Earl of Manchester procured to her order upwards of four thousand seven hundred and fifty-five yards of material, which cost £2139.

Lord Manchester also corresponded with Vanbrugh on the subject of music. Vanbrugh was the first to introduce opera-singers into England, and an opera was started under his auspices, Handel and Buononcini being engaged on the staff. Vanbrugh wrote to Lord Manchester, 24th February 1708:—

"My Lord, I intended to trouble your Lordship with a long letter about our opera affaires; but I have not time to-night, and yet I am engaged with promises not to let slip this post. I, therefore, only acquaint your Lordship that at last I got the Duke of Marlborough to put an end to this Play House friction by engaging the Queen to exert her authority, by means of which the actors are all put under the Patent at Covent Garden House, and the Operas established at the Haymarket to the general liking of the town.

"Both go on in a very successful manner, and without disturbing one another. This settlement pleases so well that people are now safer to see Operas carried to a greater perfection; and in order to it the Town cries out for a man and woman of the first rate to be got next winter from Italy. At the same time, they declare for the future against subscriptions, and have not come into any this winter.

"I have, therefore, with several to back me, laid before my Lord Marlborough the necessity there is for the Queen to be at some expense. And (I) have such an answer both from him and my Lord Treasurer as makes me write this letter to your Lordship, to acquaint you that if Nicolini and Santini will come over I will venture as far as £1000 between them, to be either

divided equally, or more or less to another as your Lordship shall think fit to adjust with them, if you please to give yourself the trouble of making the agreement," &c. &c.

Vanbrugh also suggested that the artists should be paid in *pistoles d'or* or *Louis d'or*, which would be a saving. "My affaires," he says, "are in a much more prosperous state than when your Lordship left London!"

Sir John Vanbrugh's liabilities are thus referred to by Mr. Maynwaring in a letter to the duchess:—

"I have read Mr. Van.'s letter, and can only say I am sorry for him, because I believe he is unhappy through his own folly, and can see no reasonable way to help him. What I mean by his folly is his building the play-house, which cost him a great deal more than was subscribed; and his troubles arise from workmen that built it, and the tradesmen that furnished the cloaths, &c., for the actors."

In another letter to Lord Manchester, Vanbrugh says:—

"'Tis voices are the things at present to be got, and if those top ones come over, 'twill facilitate bringing the Queen into a scheme now preparing by my Lord Chamberlain and others, to have concerts of music in the summer at Windsor twice a week in the apartments."

He adds, at the end of his letter: "My Lady Marlborough now goes very often to court, and is in perfect good-humour. I hope all will be right."

Vanbrugh had to contend with many difficulties before opera could be established in London on a firm basis. It was not till twelve years later that the

Royal Academy of Music was founded, and regular subscriptions opened to set the opera going. The first royal personage to head the list was George I., who put down £50,000, and appointed several great lords on the committee of direction.

But this is anticipating events. In the days of Anne, although music was not very high class in style or composition, it was considered "modish" to play on musical instruments. The dandies used to resort to a tavern known as the "Crown and Anchor," and gave concerts, to which, for a small fee, the public were admitted. This was the origin of the Ancient Concerts, which survived for more than a hundred years.

Purcell, who died in 1695, had foreseen the difficulty there would be to establish good music in England. He said: "Music is still in its infancy, a froward child which gives hopes of what he may be hereafter in England when the masters of it shall find more encouragement. It is now learning Italian, which is its best master, and studying a little of the French air to give it somewhat more of gaiety and fashion."<sup>1</sup>

One of the first operas to attract delighted crowds was Handel's "Rinaldo." It was well put on the stage and had sensational effects. In one act a flight of sparrows were released; they got into the house and fluttered out the candles. The public and the critics were delighted with the scenery and the actors, but little was said about the foreign composer, Handel.

In March 1708, Lord Manchester wrote recommending a Venetian musician to the Duchess of Marlborough. He had been in the service of the Queen of Prussia, could play on the bassoon, guitar, hautboy, and harpsi-

<sup>1</sup> The remark is quoted in the Duke of Manchester's "Court and Society," from which work the information about the origin of the opera is taken.

chord, and had composed a book of music, a copy of which Lord Manchester sent her Grace. Besides these accomplishments he could speak several languages, and had already been to England.

Lord Manchester suggested that perhaps Queen Anne might take him into her service at a salary of £300 a year; or possibly it might be worth the musician's while to come for less, as he could be employed in helping the opera, which, his lordship believed, was still the fashion.

It was not, however, fated that this versatile and talented artist, named Mancini, should see Queen Anne's court. The following is Sarah's reply:—

"ST. JAMES, *April* 13, 1708.

"I am extremely ashamed to have been so long without thanking your Lordship for the honour of your letter of the 16th March, where you seemed to desire an answer sooner, but indeed I have been in a perpetual hurry ever since. I think nothing is more wanted in this country than such a person as your Lordship describes, but the Queen has so little time that she never heard any of her own music, among which is some very good, and I believe she will not care to take any new, though what this gentleman proposes is very little for a man that can entertain so many ways, and I should think it would be very well worth their while that manage our operas here to make a certain bargain with him.

"But every one tells me that matter is in so much disorder that I cannot undertake to answer for any promise they should make, and therefore I am fearful to meddle in it; but if I were to retire from court, which some time or other may be one's lot, I think one could not bestow money better than take such a person



into one's house, but that cannot be thought of till Woodstock is built, which may not be for years, or at least in my life time. . . . I am glad to hear your Lordship has thought of coming home, because I conclude by myself it is agreeable to you, and what is so will always be very sincerely wished by your faithful and most humble servant,  
S. MARLBOROUGH."

In later years the duchess engaged Buononcini as musician and choirmaster at a salary of £500 a year, with a comfortable home at Blenheim.

There was great rivalry between Handel and Buononcini, and among the different members of the nobility who supported them.

To return to Blenheim. The Duke of Marlborough wrote to Mr. Boulter of Woodstock :—

"21st March 1706.

"I doubt not you have observ'd as well as myself (though I forgot to speak of it when I was last at Woodstock) that it will occasion great disorder in the gardens if people have a liberty of coming in when they please, and upon inquiry I find keys have been given to severall, which will not be an inconvenience at the present, but a disobligation when you come to ask them again ; and therefore to prevent it in time I desire they may be all recalled in a gentle manner, and for the future no more disposed to anybody but to those whose business lyes in the gardens.—Your humble servant,

"MARLBOROUGH.<sup>1</sup>

"In the month of August I desire you will let me know how the house advances."

<sup>1</sup> Autograph letter. British Museum.

The greater part of the money voted by Parliament for the building of the palace was never paid, consequently a lawsuit was the result in after years. The following account is to be found in Disraeli's "Curiosities of Literature," from an unpublished case of the Duke of Marlborough and Sir John Vanbrugh: "In the absence of the Duke of Marlborough abroad, in 1705, Sir John contrived to obtain from Lord Godolphin a warrant constituting Vanbrugh surveyor, with power of contracting on behalf of the Duke of Marlborough. How he prevailed on Lord Godolphin to get this appointment does not appear. . . . However, Vanbrugh kept entirely to himself that he had the warrant; he never mentioned to the duke that he possessed one, nor on his return did he claim to have it revived. The building proceeded with the same delay, and the payments with the same irregularity."

Sir John had so many schemes on hand, it is not surprising that he neglected Blenheim. He conceived great ideas in the matter of building, but was in no hurry to bring them to a conclusion, hence friction arose between him and the duchess, whose practical and quick mind was exasperated with this method of doing business.

The duke wrote:—

"I agree entirely with you that Mr. Vanbrugh must be carefully observed and not suffered to begin any new work; but to apply all the money to the finishing what I directed before I left England."

And again in another letter:—

"You can't be too careful of hindering Vanbrugh from beginning new foundations, for nothing is so good as the finishing of what is ordered; and for fear of mis-  
I desire you will give orders that the stables that

are already covered should be finished, so that the horses and servants might be in that building."

Vanbrugh, writing to the Earl of Manchester in July 1707, says:—

"There is so much money required for the public good this year that my Lord Treasurer can't afford us at Blenheim half what we want; however there will be a great deal done, and two summers more will finish it. My lady duchess has been there lately, and returned to Windsor so entirely pleased that she told me she should live to ask my pardon for ever having quarrelled with me, and I find she declares the same thing to the Lord Treasurer and to everybody. . . ."

Vanbrugh was not the only one who found it hard to obtain money from the Treasury. Building and decorating were undertaken at Hampton Court and elsewhere, but the workmen were not paid for years.

Marlborough mentions the anniversary of the battle of Blenheim in a letter to the duchess, and hopes she had not forgotten to present the Queen with the colours, a custom prevailing to this day. The small white flag with a gold embroidered *fleur-de-lis* is annually presented to the sovereign, and can be seen at Windsor Castle.

The duke also wrote, he was so fond of pictures that he wished his wife had a place to put those he had until the gallery at Woodstock was finished, "For it is certain," he says, "there are not in England so fine pictures as some of these, particularly 'King Charles on Horseback,' done by Vandyke. It was the Elector of Hanover's, and given to the Emperor, and I hope it is by this time in Holland."

Marlborough had evidently ordered some "hangings" from Brussels, as he says in May 1708: "I have

been to see the hangings for your apartment and mine ; as much as are done of them I think are very fine. I shall not send them over until the winter, unless you desire them. I should be glad at your leisure you would be providing everything that may be necessary for furnishing those two apartments, and that you direct Vanbrugh to finish the breaks between the windows in the great cabinet with looking-glass, for I am resolved to furnish the room with the finest pictures I can get." He frequently mentions his longing to see the place finished and to live there in quiet with her.

The "hangings" the duke mentions in several letters to the duchess must be the very fine tapestry still to be seen at Blenheim, representing the various battles in which Marlborough had been engaged. The figures of both men and horses are life size. In one, depicting the battle of Bouchain, Earl Cadogan's dog is introduced ; he followed his master through all his campaigns. Among the pictures of interest at Blenheim are those given to the duke by grateful municipalities—"Lot's Departure out of Sodom," presented by the city of Antwerp ; a portrait of "Rubens and his Wife and Family," presented by the city of Brussels ; "Lot and his Daughter" (Rubens), presented by the Emperor of Germany. A great many other pictures were bought by the duke and duchess when abroad. Sarah made a list of these, with the prices then paid<sup>1</sup>—a great contrast to their present value!

In the month of August 1708 the Duke of Marlborough won the battle of Oudenarde, which began at 5 P.M. and lasted till 10 P.M. The Electoral Prince of Hanover, afterwards George I., had a narrow escape ; he was saved by a corporal killing two French officers who were attacking the prince.

<sup>1</sup> British Museum.

A thanksgiving for this victory was held at St. Paul's on the 19th August. The duchess accompanied the Queen in her coach. The procession started from the Cockpit at 9 A.M., and her Majesty did not return until four o'clock.

It was now brought home to Sarah how much her influence with the Queen had waned. Finding the jewels she had carefully prepared for her Majesty to wear had been discarded for some other arrangement prepared by Mrs. Masham, the Duchess of Marlborough felt hurt. It was the more unpalatable as the duke, her husband, was being honoured on this occasion. It is said an altercation on the subject actually took place in the cathedral between her Majesty and the duchess. Sarah's eyes were opened by this incident, and perceiving that intrigues were undermining her own and the duke's interests with the Queen, was most anxious he should be informed of what was going on. This information she dared not commit to writing, so determined upon a journey to Flanders, ostensibly to compliment the duke on his recent victory, but really to acquaint him of the cabals undermining his influence at court. Of this expedition an anecdote is told.

Being much preoccupied on leaving Dunkirk, where she passed one night, the duchess omitted to make a present to the chambermaid at the inn. The maid resented this, attributing the neglect to want of generosity; she determined to compensate herself. Procuring a number of bottles, she filled them with some coloured water, corking and sealing them securely. The girl then announced she had a quantity of eye-water, which the Duchess of Marlborough on leaving Dunkirk had given her to sell. As a result of the ruse, such miraculous cures were attributed to the lotion that their fame reached the duchess's ears in the English camp.



Her Grace thereupon recollected her omission, and felt vexed at the resentment shown by the servant, but knew not how to remedy it. On returning home the duchess again stayed at the inn. That night the maid attended her as before. "Child," said Sarah, "I hear you have a famous eye-water to sell; I have a mind to be a purchaser." The girl, much confused, answered faintly that it had been disposed of. "What quantity might you have of it?" said her Grace. "Only a few dozens," replied she. "Well, can you supply more?" was the next question. The young woman, greatly embarrassed, relapsed into tears, and falling on her knees, confessed her fault and implored pardon. "Nay; but indeed, child," said her Grace, "you must make up some for me, for I have an excellent character of its sovereign virtues." Finding that the duchess would not be denied, the girl fetched some bottles, and, to the duchess's astonishment, she found her own crest attached to them, a thing she had never dreamt of.

"Well, my dear," said Sarah, "I find you're a mistress of your trade: you make no scruple to counterfeit a seal."

"Madam," replied the maid, "you dropped the seal in the room, and that put the idea into my head."

"And what might you gain," said her Grace, "by your last supply?"

"Fifty francs," was the answer.

"Very well," said the duchess, "please restore the seal and there is double that sum for you," putting five Louis d'or in her hand, and she added with a severe look and in a stern voice, "*Be wary of counterfeits.*"<sup>1</sup>

In October, towards the end of the campaign, the King of Savoy, thinking Marlborough was about to embark for England, wished him a prosperous voyage.

<sup>1</sup> "Be very suspicious."

The duke answered in French with great humour, "*Que le temps etant fort froid, il ne voulait pas passer la mer sans Gand.*" Accordingly, he and Prince Eugene crowned their successes by the taking of Ghent and Bruges, the former place having been betrayed into French hands some months previously.

On the duke's arrival before Ghent, the chief magistrate waited upon him and begged he would not bombard the town, assuring him he would prevail on the garrison to surrender. Notwithstanding this, preparations for an assault went forward. Before it was too late, Count la Motte capitulated, and the garrison was allowed to march out with all honour.

## CHAPTER VIII

### UNDER QUEEN ANNE

(1704-1709)

"Then came your new friend : you began to change—  
I saw it and grieved—to slacken and to cool ;  
Till taken with her seeming openness,  
You turned your warmer currents all to her,  
To me you froze : this was my mead for all.  
Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,  
And partly that I hoped to win you back."

By various hints in the preceding letters, one perceives things had not been going very smoothly at court. To understand the misunderstandings that led up to this state of affairs, it is necessary to go back a little in point of time.

On becoming Queen, Anne had thrown herself into the hands of the Tory party, a step disapproved of by Lady Marlborough, who considered the Queen would have done better to support the Whigs, as stauncher to the principles of the Revolution and more likely to promote the welfare of queen and country.

These two great factions, Whig and Tory, were the outcome of the Puritans and Royalists. Many of the Tories were believed to be Jacobites at heart. They hated the dissenters and were against toleration. Party feeling was intense, and showed itself by bitter acrimony on both sides. As time went on these factions modified their opinions, and about a hundred years later merged into the Conservative and Liberal parties of the present day.

Anne from her infancy had imbibed the most unconquerable prejudice against the Whigs, looking upon them as Republicans and implacable enemies to the Church of England. The Tories had on the contrary assisted her with her settlement, though they had done this more to oppose King William than out of regard for the Princess Anne.

Sarah says that notwithstanding Lord Marlborough and Lord Godolphin's long devotion to her cause, Anne would not have favoured them on ascending the throne had they not belonged to the Tory party. Both these lords had from childhood held the belief that the Tory or High Church party was the best for the Constitution. "Nor," says Sarah, "were they perfectly undeceived but by experience!"

The differences that arose between the Queen and Sarah on the subject of politics, was no doubt the thin end of the wedge of discord, and these disagreements were taken advantage of by two intriguing persons about the court. These were Mrs. Masham and Harley, who had for long been plotting to get the Queen into their power.

Something must now be said of Mrs. Masham's—otherwise Abigail Hill's—antecedents. Long before Sarah's birth, one of her father's sisters married a Mr. Hill, a merchant trading in the East, who unfortunately was not content with ordinary business, but took to speculation and brought ruin upon his family. It was after Princess Anne's marriage that Mrs. Churchill was informed that these relations of hers, whom she had never seen, were in great want—on hearing which Sarah gave ten guineas for their immediate necessities, promising to do what she could for them. Subsequently she saw Mrs. Hill and helped her further. Soon after the interview Mrs. Hill died, and left four children.

Abigail, the eldest, was invited to live at St. Albans with Sarah's own family, and was treated with great kindness. A vacancy occurring in the princess's household, Sarah applied for the post for her cousin and obtained it.

When later Lord Churchill was forming the Duke of Gloucester's household, Sarah got him to appoint Abigail's younger sister a superintendent of the laundry, and on the young prince's death a pension of £200 a year was granted her out of the privy purse. This sum was afterwards computed, and an annuity bought with the money.

Abigail's eldest brother obtained a post in the Custom-House, through the good offices of Lord Godolphin, while the youngest boy Mrs. Churchill clothed and sent to a good school at St. Albans, frequently asking him to her house, and treating him as her own child. When he left school he obtained a vacant post in Prince George's household, at Sarah's request, and later was promoted Groom of the Chamber to the Duke of Gloucester. "And," says Sarah, "though my Lord Marlborough always said that Jack Hill was good for nothing, yet, to oblige me, he made him his aide-de-camp and afterwards gave him a regiment, but it was his sister's interest that raised him to be a general and to command in that ever memorable expedition to Quebec. When Mr. Harley thought it useful to attack the Duke of Marlborough in Parliament, this Quebec general, this honest Jack Hill, this once ragged boy whom I clothed, happening to be sick in bed, was nevertheless persuaded by his sister to get up and go to the House to vote against the Duke."

Sarah has been blamed for providing so well for her relations, but she would have been much more censured in her own day if, with so much influence, she had allowed



them to starve. The black ingratitude she experienced was enough to turn the milk of human kindness to gall and wormwood in a temperament such as the Duchess of Marlborough possessed. How she was requited by the Hill family is best told in her own words.

She says,<sup>1</sup> "I had done so much to oblige her (Abigail) without having ever done anything to offend her, that it was long before I could bring myself to think her other than a true friend, or forbear rejoicing at any instance of favour shown her by the Queen. I observed that she was grown more shy of coming to me, but I imputed this to her peculiar moroseness of temper, and for some time made no other reflection upon it.

"The first thing which led me into inquiries about her conduct was being told (in the summer of 1707) that my cousin Hill was privately married to Mr. Masham. I went to her and asked if it were true. She owned it was, and begged my pardon for having concealed it from me. As much reason as I had to take ill this reserve in her behaviour, I was willing to impute it to bashfulness and want of breeding rather than to anything worse. I embraced her with my usual tenderness, and very heartily wished her joy; and then, turning the discourse, entered into her concerns in as friendly a manner as possible, contriving how to accommodate her with lodgings by removing her sister into some of my own. I then inquired of her very kindly whether the Queen knew of her marriage, and very innocently offered my service if she needed it to make that matter easy. She had by this time learnt the art of dissimulation pretty well, and answered with an air of unconcernedness, that

<sup>1</sup> "Conduct."

'the bedchamber women had already acquainted the Queen with it,' hoping by this answer to divert any further examination into the matter. But I went presently to the Queen and asked her, 'why she had not been so kind as to tell me of my cousin's marriage,' expostulating with her upon the point, and putting her in mind of what she used to say to me out of Montaigne, 'that it was no breach of promise of secrecy to tell such a friend anything, because it was no more than telling it to one's self.' All the answer I could obtain from her Majesty was this, 'I have a hundred times bid Masham tell it you and she would not.'

"The conduct both of the Queen and Mrs. Masham convinced me that there was some mystery in the affair, and thereupon I set myself to inquire into it.

"In less than a week's time I discovered 'that my cousin was become an absolute favourite; that the Queen herself was present at her marriage in Dr. Arbuthnot's lodgings,' at which time her Majesty had called for a round sum out of the privy purse; 'that Mrs. Masham came often to the Queen, when the prince was asleep, and was generally two hours every day in private with her.'

"I likewise discovered beyond dispute that Mr. Harley's 'correspondence and interest at court was by means of this woman.'

"I was struck with astonishment at such an instance of ingratitude, and should not have believed, if there had been any room for doubting.

"Even the husband of Mrs. Masham had obligations to me. It was at my instance that he was first made a page, then equerry, and afterwards groom of the bedchamber to the prince; for all which he himself thank'd me, as for favours procured by my means.

"My Lord Marlborough was at first no less in-

credulous than I, as appears by the following letter from him, in answer to one from me on this subject :—

““ MELDEST, *June 3, 1707.*

“ ‘The wisest thing is to have to do with as few people as possible. If you are sure that Mrs. Masham speaks of business to the Queen, I should think, you might with some caution tell of it, which would do good. For she certainly must be grateful and will mind what you say.’ ”

Sarah continues, “ It became easy now to decypher many particulars, which had hitherto remained mysterious, and my reflection quickly brought to mind many passages which had seemed odd and unaccountable, but had left no impressions of suspicion or jealousy. Particularly I remembered that a long while before this, being with the Queen (to whom I had gone privately by a secret passage from my lodgings to the bedchamber), on a sudden this woman, not knowing I was there, came in with the boldest and gayest air possible, but upon sight of me stopped; and immediately changing her manner and making a most solemn courtesy, ‘Did your Majesty ring?’ and then went out again. This singular behaviour needed no interpreter *now* to make it understood. But not to dwell on such trifling incidents, as soon as I had got a thorough insight into her management, I wrote her the following letter :—

““ *Sept. 23, 1707.*

“ ‘Since the conversation I had with you at your lodgings, several things have happened to confirm me in what I was hard to believe, that you have made me returns very unsuitable to what I might have expected. I always speak my mind so plainly that I should have told you so myself, if I had the opportunity which I

hoped for. But being now so near parting, think this way of letting you know to be the least uneasy to you as well as to your humble servant,

"S. MARLBOROUGH.

"Though I was to go to Woodstock the next day, I stayed at Windsor almost all the morning to wait her answer. This could not be had so soon, it being necessary to consult with her great director (Harley) in so nice a matter. However, an answer was sent after me, the whole frame and stile of which showed it to be the genuine product of an artful man, who knew perfectly well the management of such an affair.

"WINDSOR, *Sept. 24, 1707.*

"While I was expecting a message from your Grace to wait upon you according to your commands, last night I received a letter which surprises me no less than it afflicts me, because it lays a most heavy charge upon me of an ungrateful behaviour to your grace. Her Majesty was pleased to tell me that you was angry with me for not acquainting you with my marriage. I did believe, after so generous a pardon, your Grace would think no more of that. I am confident by the expressions of your letter that somebody has told a malicious lie of me to your Grace, from which it is impossible for me to vindicate myself till I know the crime I am accused of. I am sure, madam, your goodness cannot deny me what the meanest may ask the greatest, I mean justice to know my accuser. Without that, all friendship must be at the mercy of every malicious liar, as they are, who have so barbarously and unjustly brought me under your displeasure, the greatest unhappiness that could befall me. I therefore make it my most humble request to your Grace, that if ever I had the least share of your friend-



ship, you would be pleased to give me that parting token to let me know who this wicked person is, and then I do not doubt but I shall make it plain how much they have wronged me, as well as imposed upon your Grace. As my affliction is very great, you will, I hope, in compassion let me hear from you, and believe me, what I really am, madam, your grace's most humble servant,

" 'A. HILL.' "

"As I believe nobody at this time doubts whether the writer of this letter was practising to undermine me with the Queen, I shall make no reflections upon it. My answer to it was in these terms:—

" '(WOODSTOCK). "

" 'I received your letter upon the road to this place, and I can assure you the occasion of my complaints did not proceed from any ill offices that had been done you to me, but from my own observation, which makes the impression much the stronger. But I think the subject is not very proper for a letter, and therefore I must defer it till we meet, and give you no further trouble at this time, from your most humble servant,

" 'S. MARLBOROUGH.' "

On the duchess's return to St. James's she expected Mrs. Masham would call upon her to clear up the misunderstanding between them, but twelve days elapsed before she received even a message from her cousin, although they were both living under the same roof.

"Forgiveness to the injured doth belong,  
But they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong,"

might well apply to Mrs. Masham.

"At length," says Duchess Sarah, "having one night



passed her window on my return home, she sent one of her maids to my woman to ask her how I did, and to let me know she was gone to Kensington. This behaviour was so very ridiculous that the next time I saw the Queen I could not forbear speaking of it, and at the same time telling her all that had passed between us.

"The Queen looked grave and said, 'she (Abigail) was mightily in the right not to come near me.' I answered, 'that I did not understand *that*, since she had expressed such a concern at my displeasure, and since the clearing up of matters had been reserved to our meeting.' The Queen replied, 'that it was very natural for her to be afraid to come to me, when she saw I was angry with her.' To this I answered, 'that she had, could have, no reason to be afraid unless she knew herself guilty of some crime.' It was the Queen's usual way on any occasion, where she was predetermined (and my Lord Marlborough has told me that it was her father's) to repeat over and over some principal words she had resolved to use, and to stick firmly to them. She continued therefore to say, 'it was very natural, and she was very much in the right.'

"So that this conversation with her Majesty produced nothing but an undeniable proof that the new favourite was deeply rooted in her heart and affections; and that it was thought more advisable to let the breach between Mrs. Masham and me grow wider and wider than to use any method to make it up.

"Now, within two days, Mrs. Masham contrived to make me a visit when I was abroad. Upon observing this, and considering that our meeting could be to no purpose but to draw fruitless and false professions from her, I gave a general order to my servants to say, whenever she should call, that I was not at home. After some time it was thought proper that she should write

to me and desire I would see her, to which I consented and appointed a time.

"When she came I began to tell her 'that it was plain the Queen was much changed towards me, and that I could not attribute this to anything but secret management; that I knew she had been very frequently with her Majesty in private, and that the very attempt to conceal this by artifice, from such a friend as I had been to her, was alone a very ill sign, and enough to prove a very bad purpose at heart.' To this she very gravely answered, 'that she was sure the Queen, who had loved me extremely, would always be very kind to me.' It was some minutes before I could recover from the surprise with which so extraordinary an answer struck me. To see a woman, whom I had raised out of the dust, put on such a superior air, and to hear her assure me by way of consolation, 'that the Queen would be always very kind to me!'

"At length I went on to reproach her with her ingratitude and her secret management to undermine those who had so long, and with so much honour, served her Majesty. To this she answered, 'that she never spoke to the Queen about business, but that she sometimes gave her petitions which came to the backstairs, and with which she knew I did not care to be troubled.' And with such insincere answers she thought to colour over the matter, while I knew for certain she had before this obtained pensions for several of her friends, and had frequently paid to others out of the privy purse sums of money which the Queen had ordered me to bring her; and that she was long every day with her Majesty in private. Our conversation ended, we sat awhile silent, she rose up and said, 'she hoped I would give her leave to come sometimes and inquire after my health;' which, it is plain, she did not design to do, for

she never once came near me after this. Notwithstanding which, when she owned her marriage publicly, I went with Lady Sutherland to visit her, not that I intended to have any further intercourse with her, or to dissemble the ill opinion I had of her, but purely out of respect for the Queen and to avoid disagreeable discourse, which my refusing that ordinary civility might occasion.

“Not many days after this I went to pay my respects to the Queen in the Christmas holidays, and before I went in I learnt from the page that Mrs. Masham was just then sent for. The moment I saw her Majesty I plainly perceived she was very uneasy. She stood all the while I was with her, and looked coldly upon me, as if her intention was that I should no longer doubt of my loss of her affections. Upon observing what reception I had, I said, ‘I was very sorry I had happened to come so unseasonably.’ Making my courtesy to go away, the Queen, with a great deal of disorder in her face and without speaking a word, took me by the hand. Thereupon I stooped down to kiss her’s; she took me up with a very cold embrace, and then, without one kind word, let me go. So strange a treatment after my long services, and after such repeated assurances from her Majesty of an unalterable affection, made me think that, in justice to myself, as well as regard to my mistress’s interest, I ought to write to her in the plainest and sincerest manner possible and expostulate with her upon her change to me, and upon the new counsels by which she seemed to be wholly governed. My letter was in these terms :—

“‘27th December 1707.

“‘If Mrs. Morley will be so good as to reflect and examine impartially her last reception of Mrs. Freeman, how very different from formerly, when you were glad to see her come in and sorry when she went away; certainly

you can't wonder at her reproaches upon an embrace that seemed to have no satisfaction in it but that of getting rid of her, in order to enjoy the conversation of one that has the good fortune to please you better, though I am sure nobody did ever endeavour it with more sincerity than Mrs. Freeman has done. If I had considered only my interests, and that of my family, I might have borne this change without any complaint, for I believe Mrs. Morley would be sincere in doing us good. But I have once been honoured with an open, kind confidence and trust that made all my services agreeable; and it is not possible to lose it without a mortification too great to be passed with silence, being sure I have never done anything to forfeit it, having never betrayed or abused that confidence by giving a false representation of anybody. My temper is naturally sincere, and Mrs. Morley did like it for many years. It is not in the least altered. I appeal to God Almighty that I never designed or pursued anything but I was thoroughly convinced it was Mrs. Morley's true interest and honour. I think I may safely put it to that trial if anything has yet proved unsuccessful that was of public consequence that Mrs. Freeman has been earnest to persuade Mrs. Morley to. It is not possible for me to dissemble so as to appear what I am not. So much by way of apology for what happened upon Wednesday last.

“If Mrs. Morley has any remains of the tenderness she once professed for her faithful Freeman, I would beg she might be treated one of these days either with the openness and confidence of a friend, as she was for twenty years, or else in that manner necessary for the post she is in, which unavoidably forces her to troubling Mrs. Morley upon the account of others. If she pleases to chuse which of these ways, or any other she likes Mrs. Freeman live in, she (Mrs. F.) promises to follow any

rule that is laid down, and is resolved to her life's end, and upon all occasions, to show that Mrs. Morley never had a more faithful servant.'

"My Lord Marlborough or my Lord Godolphin (I forget which) carried my letter. The Queen took no notice of it to either of these Lords, but some days after she wrote me an answer, in which she very much softened what had passed. I was very much pleased to find her Majesty in that disposition, and once more put on as easy an appearance as I could."

This much Sarah. In a short time "the great breach at court" became publicly known. Lord Godolphin and Lord Marlborough waited on the Queen, and "told her in the most respectful manner, that it was impossible for them to do any more service while Mr. Harley was in her confidence."

For not only had they become aware of his personal intrigues against themselves, but the finishing stroke was the discovery that a clerk named Gregg in Harley's office had sold information to France.

When the matter was laid before the Queen, she refused to inquire into Harley's conduct, and appeared uneasy when it was spoken of. So her two ministers "went away, to the wonder of the whole court."

At the Cabinet Council next day the Duke of Somerset said, "he did not see how they could deliberate on foreign matters since the General was not there, and the Queen saw that the rest of her ministers and chief officers were resolved to withdraw from her service if she did not recall the two who had left it." On the following day the Queen sent for the Duke of Marlborough and informed him that Harley should leave his post; this he did two days later. The decision was arrived at, Sarah thinks, at Harley's suggestion.



The Queen, however, resented her ministers' conduct in the affair, and they soon saw they had lost her confidence. For some weeks the Duchess of Marlborough abstained from going to court; "But," says Burnet, "afterwards the breach was made up in appearance, though it was little more than appearance."

Gregg was brought to trial. He defended himself by saying that State papers were left so carelessly about in Harley's office that any one could read or copy them. It was, however, necessary to make a public example. Gregg was therefore sentenced to be executed. Before he died he cleared Harley of all complicity, and appeared sorry for his treachery.

Sarah writes:—

"Through the whole summer after Harley's dismission the Queen continued to have secret correspondence with him. And that this might be better managed she staid all the sultry season, even when the prince was panting for breath, in that small house she had formerly purchased at Windsor, which, though hot as an oven, was then said to be cool, because from the Park such persons as Mrs. Masham had a mind to bring to her Majesty could be let in privately by the garden."

It appears Prince George was unfavourable to the Harley and Masham faction, for the Queen fell into the inconvenient habit of holding nocturnal conferences with them, her health suffering in consequence. A humour in her eyes, to which she had been subject from a child, caused great public concern. Prince George remarked that it was no wonder she suffered, but rather that she was not worse from late hours. Harley entertained the Queen with long and amusing stories, and had gradually insinuated himself into her regard.

The Queen continued outwardly friendly to the

Duchess of Marlborough, to whom she wrote from Kensington on May 6, 1708 :—

“I am sorry you had so ill-luck at dice yesterday. I won £300, but have lost about half of it again this morning.”

About this time Sarah obtained a grant of land close to St. James's for building a town house. The reversion had long been promised her, but she could not obtain possession until the death of some of Queen Catherine's former suite, who occupied rooms in what was known as the Friary. The duke did not altogether approve of the scheme. He says, July 1, 1708 :—

“You desire to know which is best, fifty years or three lives. I should think the term of years to be much the best, but those things are good or bad according to your own thoughts, so that you are the properest judge. Besides, you know I have no great opinion of this project, for I am very confident that in time you will be sensible that this building will cost you much more money than the thing is worth, for you may build a better apartment than you have, but you never will have so many conveniences as you have in your lodgings, and you may depend upon it that it will cost you double the money of their first estimate.

“It is not a proper place for a great house, and I am sure when you have built a little one you will not like it, so that if you have not set your heart upon it, I should advise you would think well upon it, for it is certainly more advisable to buy a house than to build one.”

The duchess, however, had set her mind upon building the house, and she got Lord Godolphin to obtain from the Queen the lease of the Crown land for

the purpose. It was granted her under the Great Seal in the name of certain trustees. Finding the space at her disposal not sufficient for a large garden, the following year, 1709, the original lease was cancelled, and a further piece of ground, known as the Royal Garden, was granted under a fresh lease for fifty years.

Having had experience of Sir John Vanbrugh's dilatory habits while finishing Blenheim, and perhaps also considering his style too massive and palatial for a town house, she employed Sir Christopher Wren, now an old man, to build her house. She could hardly have chosen any one with greater taste and simplicity of style than this architect.

Marlborough House was originally a two-storied dwelling, with an ornamental balustrade surmounting the top. At the main entrance facing the Park were niches containing figures, and in the centre a handsome flight of steps.

It was remarked about this time that "the Duchess of Marlborough was mighty well at court, but the Queen's fondness for t'other lady (Mrs. Masham) was not to be expressed." To show she appreciated her services, in the following September the Queen appointed Mrs. Masham Keeper of the Mall in St. James's Park, a sinecure worth £500 a year.

The Royal Family were continually moving backwards and forwards from Windsor to Kensington, change of air having been found good for Prince George's health, which was very precarious. He quitted Windsor for the last time on October 16th, and travelled to Kensington. Here he died on October 28th, to the great grief of the Queen, who dearly loved him. Although a foreigner, he was thoroughly English in his tastes, and delighted in the successes of his adopted country, which he looked upon as his own.

## DUCHESS SARAH

of the late King, £300,000. Queen Anne had been so kind to the Czar in these matters, that she had been obliged to take to Himself the name of Peter the Great.

One of the King's suite, Thomas, sixth Earl of Arundell, gave the following testimony to the excellence of the personage. He says: "I am not capable to set forth the praises due to that good man, so far, I can say, that facts proved themselves, that he kept the Queen from being beguiled to her dishonour by sycophants that were about her all the time of his life, for no sooner was he dead but she sullied the glory she had gained during her reign before by bringing in a party not used to support her. . . . Persuaded by the crafty designs of her ministry and her own weakness to discard her ablest general, the Duke of Marlborough, and her most faithful friend, she had raised her name so high beyond all other monarchs. Putting herself into the hands of a few unprincipled men to maintain their power, she sacrificed her glorious peace, and a baser act, the destruction of the Empire, just ready to enter upon action, which she was then to make the best peace they could make. The change would not have been but for the intercession of the Prince of Denmark, for he kept the conspirers off and helped her judgment to stand by those who had so successfully carried on her affairs in that part of her reign."

For a short time this grief brought the two former friends nearer together. Sarah did all in her power to comfort her relatives in the first paroxysm of sorrow. When her spare heart pained, she persuaded the Queen to give a magnificent entertainment to Sir Isaac Newton, which she did privately in the Duchess's coach. Sarah, however, could not understand how the Queen at this sad moment could be so busy with matters of detail, but it is a



*George, Prince of Denmark, K.G.  
From the original painting by William Verelstede  
in the National Portrait Gallery.*





relief to some natures to forget grief by occupying the mind with trifles. It was this want of sympathy between the former comrades that led the Queen to prefer the ministrations of Abigail, who more quickly fell into her moods.

Finding this to be the case, and having much business to occupy her thoughts, it is very evident the duchess neglected the Queen at this time, and by so doing widened the breach between them. Her friends were getting uneasy at her loss of influence. Mr. Maynwaring writes: "I hope your Grace sees the Queen every day, at least like a Scotch lady—as you call it—for if you should live a week in the house and not do it, your friends that know not much of the matter will be concerned at it and wish it otherwise. . . . It is much against my inclination to wish your Grace uneasiness tho' for a moment, but it is in order to make yourself and your friends easy for a long time, which will never happen if you do not see the Queen sometimes. I have been sorry to find that you will not seem to understand that so clearly as you do everything else. If it is a trouble to your Grace, I hope 'tis the only one you will ever know, and that in all other respects you will have as much happiness as you deserve, which is more than ever anybody yet enjoyed."

It was certainly unfortunate for the duke that his wife no longer held her former influence with the Queen. While Marlborough was in Flanders her Majesty wrote to beg he would give the command vacant by the death of the Earl of Essex to Mr. Hill, Mrs. Masham's brother, whose service did not entitle him to such promotion, and whose family the duke well knew were undermining his interest. This was proposed by the Queen's secret counsellors to make her ministers quit her, first getting her to appoint bishops without consulting her ministers,

and then prevailing upon her to select military officers without the advice of the commander-in-chief. It was thought Mr. Hill's appointment would sow discontent among the officers, and would tend to lessen the duke's authority in the army as well as at home. On the other hand, should the duke refuse, this would furnish an excellent pretence for the outcry "that the Queen was a cypher, and could do nothing." In fact, as we learn from the Duchess of Marlborough, these counsellors wished her to discard the ministers whose fidelity she had experienced, and who had carried her glory to the highest pitch, intimating that she "was a slave to the Marlborough family," while at the same time they were intent on making her their own slave.

Sir Robert Walpole tried, knowing well this action would discredit Marlborough with the allies, to dissuade the Queen from signing Hill's commission without the duke's knowledge and consent, but without avail. He therefore wrote to Marlborough advising him to acquiesce the best way he could. Lord Godolphin also wrote to the same effect.

When the duke returned from abroad he waited on the Queen, and represented to her what a prejudice it would be to her service to promote so junior an officer before those of higher rank; besides, such a particular favour to a brother of Mrs. Masham could only be interpreted as a declaration against all those who were not her friends. In short, the duke said all he could think of to change her resolution, but to no purpose. Lord Godolphin and Lord Somers both spoke to her Majesty on the same subject, representing the duke's long devotion to her service, and the bad effect this appointment would have upon the army abroad; but the Queen would say nothing favourable about Marlborough. He therefore left London for Windsor on the 15th January,

and was absent when the Privy Council assembled. The Queen made no remark about his absence, but Marlborough's withdrawal caused great wonder and talk. Several of the nobility spoke to her Majesty of the consequences likely to arise from thus mortifying a faithful servant. Anne, although acknowledging the duke's services, would not unbend, saying she hoped they would all, after mature reflection, change their views. At one time it was feared that the matter would be taken up by the House of Commons, but, owing to the duke's particular desire, no such action was taken. Sarah says: "This design was laid to my charge, but I said enough to the Queen to vindicate myself from it."

The Harley and Masham faction, becoming alarmed at the way the matter was being taken up, besought her Majesty to allow the duke to dispose of the regiment as he thought fit. However, before this reached Marlborough he had already written the Queen a letter of remonstrance, pointing out that he had lost her confidence. The Queen in her reply entered into no particulars, but assured him he had no grounds for suspicion, and desired him to come to town. Fearing, however, that some motion might be made in Parliament against Mrs. Masham, her Majesty sent messages to several persons to stand by her; some of these were known enemies to the Revolution. The Jacobites were therefore encouraged, and were seen running to court, with faces full of business and concern, "as if," says the duchess, "they were going to get the government into their hands." All this, according to Sarah, was represented as a kind of victory over the Marlborough family, which no doubt prevented a reconciliation. The duchess wrote to the Queen that, if Lord Marlborough and Lord Godolphin were unable to carry on the Government and were to retire, her Majesty would find herself in the hands of

a violent party, whom she declared would have "very little mercy or even humanity for her Majesty."

The result proved the truth of this prediction, and when some years afterwards the Queen, "*harassed and intimidated by turns, sank under pressure, not of public business but of party rancour,*" the value and good sense of the duchess's warnings became apparent. Lady Masham had Jacobean tendencies, and the duchess's fears were justified that events were tending to bring in the "Prince of Wales." Sarah never uses the word "Pretender," knowing full well he had a right by birth to the former title, and in this she shows her hatred of untruth or make-believe.

Anne's obstinacy had been previously shown in regard to Lord Somers. A few years before, Vanbrugh wrote "Things are in an odd way at court; all the interest of Lord Treasurer and Lady Marlborough, backed by every man in the Cabinet, can (not) prevail with the Queen to admit my Lord Somers into anything, not so much as to make him Attorney-General. She answers little to them, but stands firm against all they say."

Queen Anne cordially disliked Lord Somers, without apparent reason. He had particularly polished and deferential manners, and was a great contrast to Harley, who occasionally appeared the worse for drink. "I remember," says the Duchess of Marlborough, "to have been at several of Lord Somers' conversations with Queen Anne, to fill out their tea, and wash their cups. 'Tis certain that as soon as he got into his post, to obtain which I so often urged the Queen, he made his court to Abigail and very seldom came to me, and it is true that Lord Oxford and St. John used to laugh in their cups that they had instructed the Queen (how) to behave, so as to make Lord Somers think he should be her chief minister."



## CHAPTER IX

### UNDER QUEEN ANNE

(1709-1712)

"I do profess  
That for your highness' good I ever labour'd  
More than mine own."

DURING the duke's absence abroad in 1708, the superintendent of works at Blenheim, a Mr. Travers, wrote to inform the duchess that Sir John Vanbrugh had spent about £2000 upon the old manor of Woodstock, and, complaining of the expense, begged her to put a stop to it. He was of the opinion that Sir John did not intend to reside there, as he had already another house in the park on which money had been laid out. Mr. Travers also wrote to the duke in Flanders to ask permission to reside in a portion of the manor, as it was conveniently near to his business. The duke made no reply to this request; but, on his return in April, he went down to Woodstock with the duchess and Lord Godolphin, and a great consultation was held whether these ruins should stand or fall. The Lord Treasurer gave it as his opinion that they were an unsightly object, and should be as assuredly removed as if a man had a wen on his face.

The duchess says: "They were not in themselves a very agreeable sight; they happened to stand very near the middle of this very fine castle of Blenheim, and in the way of the prospect down the great avenue, for which a bridge of so vast an expense is made to go

and the pictures which decorated several large apartments were thought to have the same value.

Her anxiety at seeing the king gave instructions that no more money was to be sent in the future. She was told by her friends that she was not strictly adhering to it.

The Duke of Marlborough's stay in England was not as the following week he re-embarked for France accompanied by the Earl of Portland and Lord Townshend. The voyage took three days and two nights. During May there was some talk of peace; but the French king refused to sign the conditions and auxiliary requirements.

Two months later the duke returns to Blenheim in a state of the richest. He says, "I should be glad to know the exact measurement of the room next the saloon as also of the room at the low-window . . ." He was evidently searching for suitable drapery for his favourite residence for the following year he writes from the Hague —

"There are seventeen pieces of the enclosed pattern, various Dutch sils in each piece. Three or four of the pieces are damaged. However, they will not sell them unless they be all bought. They are contracted to take £15 the Dutch sil, which will make the whole come to one hundred and nineteen pounds. I desire you will let me know what use you can make of this velvet, and if you would have me buy it. I also send my coat-of-arms as they are to be on the hangings now making at Brussels, so that I desire you will send for Vanbrugh, and that he should take care that the crown and arms in the hangings already come over be exactly as this is."

Whether the duchess decided upon purchasing this particular brocade, there is no means of telling. The furnishing of so vast a house as Blenheim must have

been a serious matter. The following letter throws some light on the difficulties :—

"DEAR MRS. JENNENS,—I have looked upon this damask by daylight. The Pattern is not so large as she stated, but he has kept it so ill that it looks full as old as what I have, which is better than if it was fine fresh Damask. But I think it a good argument to him to sell it cheap ; for though I like it very much for this use, I would not buy it for any other. But don't part with it, for I would have the whole piece upon any terms that you can get it. I shall want a vast number of feather beds and quilts. I wish you would take this opportunity to get the prices of all such Things as will be wanted in that wild, unmerciful house, for the Man you go to is famous for low prices. I would have some of the Feather Beds Swansdown, all good and sweet Feathers, even for the Servants. I am not in haste for any Thing you are so good as to do for me."<sup>1</sup>

The duke longed for the day when he could retire and live quietly at Blenheim. He writes from the Hague in July 1709 :—

"What gives me the greatest prospect of the happiness of being with you is that certainly the Misery of France increases, which must bring us to a Peace ; the Misery of all the poor people we see is such that one must be a brute not to pity them. May you ever be happy, and I enjoy some years of quiet with you, is what I daily pray for."

After the battle of Malplaquet in September, he writes acknowledging her letter from Althorpe :—

"Where, with all my soul," he says, "I wish myself. Ever since the 11th I have every minute the account of

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, from MSS. at Madresfield. Published 1875.

the killed and wounded, which grieves my heart, the numbers being considerable, for in this battle the French were more opiniatre than in any other of this war. I hope and believe it is the last I shall see."

Three days later he writes :—

"I have not yet recovered the fatigue of the battle and the two days and two nights in which I had very little sleep, so that my mouth is very sore and my blood so heated that I have continual headache . . . (this) will be an excuse for ending my letter, with assuring you that whilst I have any being in this world my heart and soul are yours."

He also writes from Rotterdam, and says :—

"I do wish you all happiness and speed with your building at London, but beg that it may not hinder you from pressing forward the building at Blenheim, for we are not so much master of that (the former) as the other."

And again, in another letter :—

"I am very glad your building goes on so entirely to your satisfaction, and that I shall see it covered at my return. I do very much agree with you that happiness is seldom found in a Court, no more than quietness in an army ; but my great comfort is, if we have success in this campaign, we may have ours in other places."

A little later he writes :—

"I am glad of the general applause your house meets with, since I am sure it gives you pleasure, and, for the same reason, be not uneasy that it costs more money than you thought it would, for, upon my word, I shall think nothing too much for the making you easy."

The duke also asks his wife to send him the exact measures of the rooms in her London house, which she desires furnished with tapestry.

A vacancy occurring this year in the rangership of Windsor Park through the death of Sir Edward Seymour, who had succeeded the Duke of Portland, Queen Anne appointed the Duchess of Marlborough to the post. It had long been a promise that Sarah was to succeed, or it is very probable that she would not now have obtained the appointment.

The duchess became exceedingly fond of the place, and spent a good deal of money in improvements to the Chief Lodge, now known as Cumberland Lodge, in the Great Park. Here was more work and responsibility for her active mind and vigorous body. In a later chapter we shall see that to carry out her duties, as she considered conscientiously, was by no means an easy task.

The following letter<sup>1</sup> proves that, taken in the right way, there was no one more willing than Sarah to do any one a good turn :—

“ WINDSOR PARK, *November 1, 1709.*

“ As I was going into my coach at St. Albans, I received the favour of your letter, dear Mrs. Coke, and as soon as I came out of it, I give myself the pleasure of writing to you and assuring you I shall be very glad that you will make use of anything or everything that is called mine at Kensington. You have said a great deal of your obligations to me, more than I deserve, for I think there is no great matter in recommending a very agreeable young woman of a good family to be a maid of honour. But some natures are obliged with everything and some with nothing, and upon this occasion I can't help regretting that one in the Queen's

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Twelfth Report.



family (Mrs. Masham) used part of my lodgings at Kensington without any ceremony, and when I took the liberty to take notice of it, she removed her things and pretended she did not know they were my lodgings. And yet after that she was pleased to make use of them again, which was a proceeding perfectly new, and what in no kind I had ever heard of before. But her education had not been the best, and all that she does is suitable to it.

"I have made this letter longer than is reasonable, or than I intended, but you must consider me as a country lady and alone. I am, with all sincerity imaginable, dear Mrs. Coke, your most faithful and humble servant,  
S. MARLBOROUGH."

Mrs. Coke was the first wife of Mr. Coke, who for so many years and under two reigns held the post of Vice-Chamberlain at the court, concerning whom a story is told. It had long been the custom to sell both commissions in the army and posts at court. Queen Anne did not countenance the latter, nor did the Duchess of Marlborough, who distinctly says she thought it a bad plan; possibly some of her unpopularity at court was due to this opinion. Be that as it may, the following anecdote will illustrate the sort of business that had often been carried on.

There was an old courtier who had lived for a long time in St. James's Palace, and had sometimes turned over a little money by selling small places. About the time of which we are writing, he met a worthy country gentleman, who had a great ambition for a post at court, and was quite willing to pay for that honour. The avaricious courtier beguiled him with the story that the Queen was tired of her vice-chamberlain, and that she would dismiss him should she meet with

a suitable person ; the lowest price, however, would be £7000, of which £4000 would be given to the Queen's foster-sister, £2000 to Mr. Coke, the outgoing vice-chamberlain, the remainder among the smaller agents in the matter. It was of the utmost importance that the candidate should show himself, so that the Queen's foster-sister might observe whether he appeared fitted for the post. Accordingly, the gentleman pranced up and down in front of the palace, to the delighted gaze of several palace housemaids who had been purposely placed at the windows. One day the candidate was conducted by the courtier to see the Queen pass to St. James's Chapel. In the Duke of Shrewsbury's absence Vice-Chamberlain Coke led her by the hand. This sight proving too much for our excited friend, he exclaimed in an audible voice, " Ah sir, what happiness ! I wish all our friends were here now to see the Vice-Chamberlain handing the Queen ; i' faith, the place is worth t'other thousand."

These words, overheard by Mr. Coke, called forth inquiry, upon which the jobbery was discovered, and the agent handed up for examination at the Secretary of State's office. The circumstances that came out during the investigation immensely diverted the court, and caused universal laughter. The Vice-Chamberlain, finding himself none the worse for the attempted sale of his post, the courtier was let off, the ridicule he had excited being considered sufficient punishment for his misdemeanour.<sup>1</sup>

The clever way the Duchess of Marlborough discovered a fraud is told of her. Sarah, having bought some fine brocade for a gown to be worn on an important occasion, gave it to a fashionable mantua-maker—a Mrs. Buda—to be made up. The duchess,

<sup>1</sup> Miss Strickland.

suspecting when trying on the dress at home that all the material had not been used, had recourse to a ruse in order to discover the truth.

Mrs. Buda was in the habit of wearing a magnificent diamond ring, well known to her employes. Her Grace, affecting to be charmed with the design of this ring, begged Mrs. Buda to allow her to have it copied by her jeweller. The unsuspecting dressmaker, proud of the opportunity of obliging the duchess, and delighted with the praise bestowed on her property, handed the ring to her Grace, who immediately went into an adjoining apartment, and despatched a trusty messenger to Mrs. Buda's house with instructions to the forewoman to send the remainder of the duchess's brocade, giving the ring as a token. Believing that her mistress had found a customer for the silk, the forewoman fell into the snare, and delivered a length of about two yards to the messenger.<sup>1</sup> Imagine the confusion of the unfortunate Mrs. Buda when the duchess returned the ring, and at the same time showed the piece of stuff. Fine brocade was worth about five or six pounds a yard. Gentlemen's shoulder-knots made of silk cost forty or fifty pounds apiece.

Queen Anne was most fastidious about dress, and appears to have made it her study. She would often notice whether her attendants were suitably attired. On one occasion Lord Bolingbroke, having been hastily sent for, appeared in a Ramilly or tie-wig, which so offended her Majesty that she said, "I suppose his lordship will come to court the next time in his night-cap." There was a great deal of character as well as etiquette in the wearing of a wig. The difference between the wigs painted by Sir Peter Lely and those of Sir Godfrey Kneller is, that the Lely wig falls down

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Sarah."

the shoulder in front, while the Kneller is thrown over the shoulders behind.

The Duke of Ormonde was the most fanciful of all the wig dandies. In four different portraits he appears in flowing wigs, all differently curled. It was the fashion to carry wig-combs made of tortoise-shell and engraved. At the theatres and on the Mall gentlemen conversed while they combed their perukes. The shapes varied; there were black riding wigs, bag wigs, night-cap wigs, besides the flowing perukes. Some of these were worth fifty guineas each, and were frequently stolen. There is no doubt that wigs gave great dignity, and were very becoming to some countenances. They were in keeping with the handsome dress of the period, when men wore silk or velvet wide-skirted coats, long white satin waistcoats, lace cravats, silk stockings, and buckled shoes.

Such was the appearance of the courtiers who attended the famous trial of Dr. Sacheverell for seditious preaching (February 1710) in Westminster Hall. Stands were erected to accommodate as many as possible; the peers wore their robes, and were each given eight tickets. The Queen and her ladies attended. Duchess Sarah, who was evidently beginning to feel not quite sure of her ground, relates a scene that took place, more interesting to us than the real trial. She says, "This was at Dr. Sacheverell's trial, where I waited on the Queen the first time she went thither, and, having stood two hours, said to the Vice-Chamberlain that when the Queen went to any place incognito (as she went to the trial and only looked from behind the curtain) it was always the custom of the ladies to sit down; but her Majesty had forgotten to speak to us now, and since the trial was likely to continue long every day I wished he would put the Queen in mind of it;



to which he replied very naturally, 'Why, madam, should you not speak to the Queen yourself, who are always in waiting?' This I knew was right, and therefore went up to the Queen and, stooping down to whisper to her, said I believed her Majesty had forgotten to order us to sit, as was customary in such cases. Upon this she looked indeed as if she had forgot, and was sorry for it, and answered in a very kind, easy way, 'By all means, pray sit,' and she called Mr. Mordaunt, the page of honour, to bring stools and desire the ladies to sit down, which we did, Lady Scarborough, Lady Burlington, and myself. But as I was to sit nearest the Queen I took care to place myself a good distance from her, and used a further caution of showing all the respect I could by drawing a curtain in such a manner betwixt her and me, so as to appear to be in a different room from her Majesty. But my Lady Hyde, who stood behind the Queen when I came up to speak to her, continued to stand and never came to sit with us the rest of the day, which I then took for nothing more than making a show of more than ordinary favour with the Queen. The next day the Duchess of Somerset came to the trial, and before I sat down I asked if her Grace would not be pleased to sit, at which she gave a sort of start back with the appearance of being surprised, as if she thought I had asked a very strange thing, and refused sitting. I observed that it was always the custom to sit before the Queen in such cases and that her Majesty had ordered us to do so the day before, but that her refusing it now looked as if she thought that we had done something not proper. To which she answered that she did not care to sit, and then went and stood behind the Queen, as Lady Hyde had done the day before, which I took no notice of then but sat down with Lady Burlington. But when



I came to reflect on what the ladies had done, I plainly perceived that, in the Duchess of Somerset especially, this conduct could not be thought to be the effect of humility, but that it must be a stratagem to flatter the Queen, by paying her more respect, and to make some public noise of this matter that might be to my disadvantage or disagreeable to me."<sup>1</sup>

The trial lasted three weeks, and gave rise to much popular excitement. Sacheverell had many partisans who considered him a martyr, ladies wearing his portrait on their fans and snuff-boxes. Even the Queen sympathised with the doctor, whose principles agreed with her Tory ones. The Duchess of Marlborough, on the contrary, calls him an "ignorant, impudent incendiary; a man who was the scorn even of those who made use of him as a tool." Dr. Sacheverell was ably defended, but by a majority of seven votes was found guilty of high crimes and misdemeanour.

The prisoner, being brought to the bar of the House of Lords, knelt until told to rise by the Lord Chancellor. Judgment was then pronounced, this being that the doctor was enjoined not to preach for three years, and the two sermons that had given so much offence were to be burnt by the common hangman in the presence of the Lord Mayor and sheriffs of Middlesex. This was considered a mild sentence, and his sympathisers showed their joy by bonfires not only in London, but all over the kingdom, while Sacheverell's journey to a distant Welsh parish was made a triumphal progress.

The Duke of Marlborough was not present at the trial, having started for Harwich on the 19th February, when he was convoyed over the Channel by seven men-of-war.

The Tories considered the judgment given against

<sup>1</sup> Appendix to Mrs. Thompson's "Life of the Duchess of Marlborough."

Dr. Sacheverell as tantamount to a victory, and knowing the Queen's inclination to their side, set about ousting the opposite party. Mrs. Masham and Harley were prime movers of the scheme. The first person to be got rid of was the Duchess of Marlborough; they had long waited for an opportunity. Sarah says: "I learnt that the Queen was made to believe that I often spoke of her in company disrespectfully. As I knew myself incapable of it, I begged that she would be pleased to give me a private hour, because I had something I was very desirous of saying to her Majesty before I went out of town." The duchess suggested certain hours during which the Queen was generally at leisure, but all were refused, to her surprise. At last the Queen appointed an hour, but the same evening wrote saying she desired the Duchess of Marlborough to lay before her in writing whatever she had to say, and to gratify herself by going into the country as soon as she could. This, of course, was by the advice of her counsellors. Again Sarah imploringly asked for an interview, saying she could not put into writing what she had to say, but was obstinately refused. "I assured her Majesty that what I had to say would not create any dispute or uneasiness (it relating only to the clearing of myself from some things which, I had heard, had very wrongfully been laid to my charge), and could have no consequence, either *in obliging her Majesty to answer* or to see me oftener than would be easy to her; adding that if that afternoon were not convenient, I would come every day and wait till her Majesty would please to allow me to speak to her."

A second time the Queen fixed an hour, and broke the engagement by going to dine at Kensington, again asking the duchess to write. In answer to this Sarah requested permission to follow her Majesty to Kensing-

ton. She went there on 6th April, and succeeded in gaining admittance. Her final interview with the Queen is thus recounted by Sarah in a letter to Mr. Hutchinson, and in the "Conduct":—

"I arrived at Kensington to see the Queen, and asked a page of the back-stairs (Mr. Abrahall) whether he did not sometimes scratch at the door of the Queen's room. He replied he did sometimes when others were out of the way. I bid him go and tell the Queen I was there. I sat in the window like a Scotch lady with a petition waiting for an answer. I doubt not you will think it was humble enough in me, who had the keys by my side; and if I had not used more than ordinary caution not to surprise the Queen, might have gone directly to her, by virtue of my own post, without further ceremony. I protested to her Majesty that I had no design, in giving her this trouble, to solicit the return of her favour, but my sole reason was to clear myself, which was too just a design to be disappointed. Upon this the Queen offered to go out of the room. I followed her, begging leave to clear myself; and the Queen repeating over and over again, 'You desired no answer, and shall have none.' When she came to the door, I fell into great disorder; streams of tears flow'd down against my will, and prevented my speaking for some time. At length I recovered myself, and appealed to the Queen, in the vehemence of my concern, whether I might not still have been happy in her Majesty's favour, if I could have dissembled my real opinion of men or things? whether I had played the hypocrite once? whether I had offended in anything, unless in a very zealous pressing upon her, that which I thought necessary for her service and security?"

A few years before the Masham intrigues the Queen

had urged the duchess to speak without reserve, saying, "You can never give me any greater proof of your friendship than in telling your mind freely in all things, which I do beg you to do," &c. ; but this was not now the case, and it was foolish of Sarah not to perceive that her relations with the Queen could never again be the same. The duchess continues : "I then said I was informed by a credible person about the court, that things were laid to my charge of which I was wholly incapable ; that this person knew such stories were perpetually told to her Majesty to incense her, and had beg'd of me to come and vindicate myself ; that the same person had thought me of late guilty of some omissions towards her Majesty, being entirely ignorant how uneasy to her my frequent attendance must be, after what had happened between us. I explained some things which I had heard her Majesty had taken amiss of me, and then with a fresh flood of tears, and a concern sufficient to move compassion even where love was absent, I begged to know what other particulars she had heard of me, that I might not be denied all power of justifying myself. But still the only return was 'You desired no answer, and you shall have none.' I then begged to know if her Majesty would tell me some other time ? 'You desired no answer, and you shall have none.' I then appealed to her Majesty again, if she did not herself know that I had often despised interest in comparison of serving her faithfully and doing right ? And whether she did not know me incapable of disowning anything which I knew to be true ? 'You desired no answer, and you shall have none.' This usage was so severe, and these words so often repeated so shocking (being an utter denial of common justice, to one who had been a most faithful servant), that I could not conquer myself, but said the most disrespectful thing I ever spoke to the Queen in



my life, and yet what such circumstances might well excuse if not justify. And that was that 'I am confident her Majesty would suffer for such an instance of inhumanity.' The Queen answered, 'That will be to myself.' Thus ended this remarkable conversation, the last I ever had with her Majesty. It is probable this conversation had never been consented to but that her Majesty had been carefully provided with those words, as a shield to defend her against every reason I could offer."

When the duchess came out, she remained some time in the Long Gallery to wipe away her tears, and then bethought herself, and went to the door and "scratched." The Queen opened the door, and Sarah remarked that she thought it would be awkward at Windsor if she was at the lodge when the court was there. Queen Anne answered that she might come to the castle. Stories soon got about giving an untrue account of the interview, and representing that the duchess had gone in rudely to the Queen.

Thus ended a lifelong friendship, of which there appears no parallel in history. Overlooking the relative positions of Queen and subject, one observes that these two friends had for thirty-eight years gone through life in double harness; they had jogged on together, the one slow and indolent, the other impetuous, full of fire and spirit, often kicking and plunging, but still going on, helping her companion and keeping her on the right road; they were driven by the hand of Fate. A time came, however, as in a bad dream, when Fate, in the person of Mrs. Masham, imperceptibly cut the harness, till at the parting of the ways it fell asunder. Feeling at liberty to go her own pace, the indolent one was easily led to her destruction; her companion reared, kicked, and plunged in her anxiety to follow, foreseeing disaster, but an insurmountable barrier was across the path.



Queen Anne's behaviour resembled the man in the north wind blew hard, and could not force the coat part with his own, which he only hugged the tighter. But when the genial sun appeared, no persuasion was required to cause him discard the garment. When King William and Queen Mary used all their authority to make the princess part with Lady Marlborough, this only made her cling the more to her friend. But when by flattery and gentle words Mrs. Masham poisoned the Queen's mind against her former favourite, her persuasion succeeded where authority had failed. The Queen, having discovered through Mrs. Masham how much she was governed by the duchess, felt she could never again endure such flatters, but in reality she was as much governed as before, and by those who were less disinterested in her service, for Mrs. Masham and probably Mr. Ley were working for themselves alone, and Sarah with all her faults had the Queen's welfare at heart. That the discovery of the Queen Anne by a person who had been raised to her position through the kindness of the duchess, proves that Mrs. Masham possessed a gratitude incapable of gratitude.

The following anecdote is given as the primary cause of the estrangement between the two previously inseparable friends. "One afternoon, not many weeks after the death of the Duke of Gloucester, the Princess Anne noticed she had no gloves; she therefore told Abigail Hill to fetch them from the next room. She obeyed, but the gloves were not on the table, for Lady Marlborough, who was seated reading a letter, had taken them up by accident and put them on. Abigail subsequently mentioned that she had put on by mistake the Duchess's gloves. 'Ah!' exclaimed Lady Marlborough, 'I have I on anything that has touched



*Princess Anne, with her son the Duke of Gloucester  
From the original painting by Michael Dahl  
in the National Portrait Gallery.*



the odious hands of that disagreeable woman?' Then, pulling the gloves off, she threw them on the ground, exclaiming violently, 'Take them away!' Abigail obeyed silently, and retired with her usual stealthy quietude, carefully closing the door, which had previously been left ajar. Directly she entered the room where the princess sat, she plainly perceived that her Royal Highness had heard every word of the dialogue. But neither discussed the matter at that time, and the incident remained a profound secret between them, for it so happened that the princess had had no one but Mrs. Abigail Hill in the room with her. Lady Marlborough soon left the adjoining saloon, and certainly remained for ever unconscious of what her mistress had overheard." Possibly Sarah's words were distorted or much exaggerated, as the tale was circulated by Mrs. Masham, and handed down by word of mouth. In any case the event was supposed to have taken place so long before as 1696. It can hardly be believed that Queen Anne could for so long have repressed all resentment, and have continued to shower kindnesses on Sarah Marlborough, were the story true. The legend went the round of Europe. Voltaire mentions it in his "*Siècle de Louis XIV.*," as also the incident of the duchess having spilt a glass of water on Mrs. Masham's gown during a court ceremony; this was of course supposed to have been done purposely! Frederick the Great also attributes "the ruin of Europe" (Peace of Utrecht) to the story of the gloves and "the intrigues of a lady's maid."

Various other reasons are given for Sarah's loss of influence, but, as previously stated, the most natural one, judging from Anne's character, is that Sarah neglected her mistress and absented herself too frequently from court, thus allowing Abigail to fill the gap which she had

left. It must be remembered that Sarah was forty-two when Anne ascended the throne; she had children and grandchildren, and many interests outside the court. Anne was growing indolent and unwieldy, and possibly required more personal attendance than of old. Probably the duchess considered that some of her duties could be equally well done by another (such as sleeping on the floor of her mistress's bedroom), but Sarah did not foresee that her influence might be undermined, and was wholly unsuspecting until too late. Anne's friendship, notwithstanding her generosity, was a somewhat selfish one. Her character was too weak and apathetic to allow her to decide for herself. She required something to lean upon; the person who was near and had her ear was the one she clung to, and this fact Sarah did not realise. The duchess herself says, "My constant combating the Queen's inclination to the Tories did in the end prove the ruin of my credit with her."

In her "vindication" Sarah mentions two friends, Lady Fitzharding and Lady Bathurst, who were both entertaining women, and whose company she liked, but adds, "The Queen did not care for anybody that I gave my mind to." Anne must have been a dull companion, if we may judge by the following letter of Sarah's to an unknown correspondent:—

"ST. ALBANS, *April 23, 1711.*

"I fancy that anybody that had been shut up so many tedious hours, as I have been with a person that had no conversation, and yet must be treated with respect, would feel something of what I did, and be very glad when their circumstances did not want it, to be free from such a slavery which must be uneasy at all times, though I do protest that upon the account of her loving me, and trusting me so entirely as she did;



I had a concern for her, which was more than you will easily believe, and I would have served her with the hazard of my life upon any occasion; but after she put me at liberty by using me ill, I was very easy, and liked better that anybody should have her favour than myself at the price of flattery, without which I believe nobody can be well with a king or queen, unless the World should come to be less corrupt or they (the monarch) wiser than any I have seen since I was born."

Had Sarah herself been less open-minded, she would sooner have suspected Abigail, but it never occurred to her to be jealous of a person devoid of intellectual qualities or strength of character.

The following draft of a letter never sent to the Queen can be found in the duchess's "Private Correspondence":<sup>1</sup>—

"When I was last at Windsor I found a letter from my cousin Hill, in which she has used this expression to me, 'You are so happy that your enemies never reproached you, either with want of sense or sincerity.' She concludes with professions of her own sincerity, and that she is my most faithful servant. I have several letters under her hand to acknowledge that never any family had received such benefits as hers had done from me, which I will keep to show the World what returns she has made for obligations that she was sensible of."

Sarah had been blamed on all sides; by some for neglecting the Queen and thus leaving the field open for a new favourite; by the opposite party for having had too much influence with her Majesty, and thereby having kept so long in office two such excellent ministers as Godolphin and Marlborough.

<sup>1</sup> Published in 1838.

At times her violent temper led her to do and say unbecoming things, then she had no command over herself, but her letters also prove that she could be graceful as well as courteous in her correspondence, and was a well-bred woman of the world. Many are the stories that are told in connection with "scenes" in which Sarah was the principal. In calmer moments she repented, and pride alone prevented her making amends. She sometimes qualifies her own statements, saying in one letter, "I write so much that I do not know what I write;" and in another, "You know my way to tumble out the truth just as it comes into my head."

When the Duchess of Marlborough retired from court in April 1709, she wrote to J. Craggs, "The message the Queen sent me, that I might take a lodging for 10s. a week to put my Lord Marlborough's goods in, sufficiently shows what a good education and understanding the wolf has, who was certainly the person who gave that advice." She probably refers to Harley, and it is surmised that Sarah gave as an excuse for not turning out at once that she had nowhere to put Lord Marlborough's things, her house in St. James's Park not being completed. It is said she took away the locks and door-plates from her apartments; the Queen, however, acknowledged that Sarah had originally put them on. The duke ordered his wife not to remove the marble chimney-pieces which they had also put in. It is reported that the Queen threatened to stop building Blenheim Palace if her house was to be pulled about!

Duchess Sarah retired to the country on her withdrawal from court, spending part of her time at Windsor and part at St. Albans. The duchess writes from St. Albans thus warmly to a friend, shortly after her retirement from court, "I can't trouble you with the enclosed

without thanking you a thousand times for the pains you took lately to come to this place, which I hope you will see again before we settle at London. The air is very good, and you will find many friends, and particularly one that will continue so to the end of my life." However, it did not satisfy either her friends or the Whig party that she should keep away for long, and she received frequent letters urging her to return to town. Lady Cowper wrote on 14th May to the duchess, then at Windsor Lodge, and assured her that her presence was much wanted at this critical time, when their safety depended so much on the assistance and advice of good friends. She agrees, however, with Sarah that the country is much the best place to be in. Mr. Craggs also wrote on 18th May, "It is enough to distract one to consider that Mr. Harley and Mrs. Masham and their creatures shall reap the benefit of the greatest and glorious actions that ever were performed, where they were no more instrumental than their own coach horses." Mr. Maynwaring addressed several letters to the duchess on the same subject. In one he said, "And though you wrote Lord Sunderland word that it was impossible to do any good, I do believe your absence at this time has given opportunity and means for mischief to sprout, which younger men than me will not see the end of."

The next person to be discarded after the Duchess of Marlborough's dismissal was her son-in-law, Lord Sunderland. When the rumour reached the Duke of Marlborough's ears he wrote an earnest letter of remonstrance to the Queen, saying how such a proposal would undermine his own authority abroad. The duchess was persuaded by her friends to write also to the Queen on the subject. Sarah says in a letter to a friend, "There needs some apology for my ever writing to her (the Queen) again after the usage at Kensington; but I con-

sidered her as a child in very ill hands, and my Lord Marlborough in a post that he could not quit easily, the campaign being begun, nor serve without great trouble if the Queen did anything that was a public mark of using him ill; these reasons, joined with the real kindness I had for Lord Sunderland, and many pressing letters from my friends, to beg I would come to town and try and serve a man who was so worthy of any pains I could take for him, made me at last resolve to do it, and in order to that I writ as you see to the Queen." All these efforts were in vain. Mr. Boyle was ordered to inform Lord Sunderland of her Majesty's decision. He asked to be excused this unpleasant task, as they had long been great friends. The Queen replied that it was best done by a friend. Mr. Boyle then said he did not know the custom on such occasions, and he thought Lord Sunderland might like to tender his own resignation. Her Majesty answered, that would be a trouble both to him and to her.<sup>1</sup> In order to soften the blow, the Queen offered Lord Sunderland a pension of £3000 a year, which, however, he refused, saying, "Since I am not allowed to serve my country, I am resolved not to pillage it." Sarah admired him for this disinterestedness; for, being poor, the money would have been very acceptable to him.

In August, Lord-Treasurer Godolphin was removed from his post, his office being placed in commission; this was only a gentle way of making room for Harley, who subsequently succeeded him.

In September, Mr. St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke, a friend of Harley's and secretly a Jacobite, was appointed Secretary of State.

From this date it may be said that the zenith of Queen Anne's reign was passed, for, when she gave up

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Rutland MSS.



the Marlboroughs, she lost prestige with foreign nations and brought discord in her own.

About this time numerous political pamphlets appeared. Swift and Prior wrote for the Tory side, while Addison and Steele wrote for the Whigs. The *Examiner*, a weekly publication, represented Tory opinion, and the *Whig Examiner* the opposite side. Nearly all these pamphlets were published anonymously, great pains being taken to keep them so. They soon degenerated into personal attacks, when there was little disguise as to the persons intended. In the autumn of 1709 one appeared, entitled "The New Atalantis," by Mrs. Manley. It was a libel of the grossest kind, written for a political purpose, attributing love passages to the duchess and Lord Godolphin, which had not the smallest foundation in fact. Mrs. Manley herself had no reputation to lose, and her book is a reflection of her mind. It had an enormous circulation. The author was prosecuted and imprisoned, but on 5th November she was admitted to bail and afterwards fined. To such an extent was party feeling carried that Swift wrote to Harley to recommend that Mrs. Manley should be rewarded for her slanders on Sarah.

Notwithstanding Mrs. Manley's prosecution, another libel appeared two years later, called *L'Histoire secrète de la Reine Zarah et des Zaraxiens, ou la Duchesse de Marlborough démasquée*, which was a skit on the cabals of the court and state. The duchess was less sensitive to these attacks than the duke; she got her friend Mr. Maynwaring to publish answers to these political hits.

Addison, the Tory writer, first attracted attention by his poem upon the battle of Blenheim called "The Campaign." He had been employed by Lord Halifax to produce something more worthy of the subject than the poor performances then fashionable. It was an age



when every kind of bad poetry and versification was brought into play. "The Campaign" met with great success, and laid the foundation of Addison's fortune. His play, "Cato," was produced at Drury Lane in 1712; and, against the author's intention, was turned to political account. Sarah's taste was offended at the many bad productions in verse, and years later, when she gave instructions for the duke's life to be written, she stipulated that there should be no verse.

But to return to the end of 1709. The campaign in the Netherlands was now concluded, and the troops placed in winter-quarters at the Hague. The Duke of Marlborough returned from abroad in December. He had already received several affronts. The Queen's reception was cold, and he was informed that he must not expect a vote of thanks to be moved in Parliament that year. The great general was anxious for his wife—who, although she had left the court, still had not resigned her office—to continue in it, as her dismissal would have a bad effect upon the foreign army under his command. He therefore induced Sarah to write a conciliatory message to the Queen, hoping a reconciliation might still be possible. Swift says, "Lady Marlborough offers, if they will let her keep her employments, never to come into the Queen's presence."

But it was determined by Harley to get rid of Marlborough, who would not serve if the duchess was dismissed. If that event could be brought about, little pressure would be required to induce the Queen to part with her faithful minister. On the 17th January the duke had an audience with her Majesty on the subject of Sarah's office, but the Queen would listen to no arguments or delay, and demanded the key in three days. The Queen granted the duke another interview the next day, but insisted on having the key

at once, and would discuss no business with him until it was returned.

Marlborough went home, and the duchess begged him to go back with the key and finish the matter. Lord Dartmouth tells us the manner of her Grace's surrender, as it had been described to him by an intimate friend of the family. "When the Duke of Marlborough told the duchess that the Queen demanded the gold key, she took it from her side and threw it into the middle of the room, and bid him take it up and carry it to whom he pleased."

This incident is very characteristic of Sarah, and was probably true. There was reason for her anger, as the key was demanded before the three days had expired, after which the Queen would have been justified in pressing for its return. Anne, however, dreaded Marlborough's influence and persuasions, and was too weak to be sure of herself. The duchess used to call her key "Mr. Maynwaring's key," as on several occasions she had threatened to resign her office, and he had always persuaded her to retain it.

Two months after this, all were horrified at the attempted assassination of Harley at the council board. It appears that an unfrocked priest, named Guiscard, who had fled from France, had been employed abroad during William's reign in command of a mixed force of Dutch and French refugees. Not being able to obtain from Anne's ministers a higher pension than £400 a year, he considered himself aggrieved, and offered his services to his former master, Louis XIV. His correspondence with France being intercepted, a warrant was issued for his arrest. He was apprehended while walking in St. James's Park. Being taken to the Cockpit, he managed to secrete a knife lying on the table before he was brought before the council assembly. It consisted

of the Lord President, Harley ; the Lord Keeper, Sir Simon Harcourt ; the Secretary of State, St. John ; the Dukes of Ormonde, Newcastle, Buckingham, Queensberry ; the Earl of Dartmouth and Earl Poulett, and the Secretary for Scotland. The Duke of Shrewsbury and the Archbishop of Canterbury were the only members of the council absent. Guiscard, while under examination, was placed so as to face the light. Harley, seated at the table, had his back to the prisoner. Finding his correspondence with France discovered, Guiscard requested a private word with St. John, his former patron, whom probably he would have assassinated. His demand being refused, he said, "That's hard ; not one word." The secretary being out of his reach, he stretched over Harley's right shoulder, and stabbed him in the breast, exclaiming, "Have at thee, then." Fortunately the knife caught in the large cuff of the sleeve, which broke the force of the blow. It however penetrated through the coat, which had a buckram as well as a silk lining, and through the flowery, brocaded waistcoat, which was blue and silver, with gold flowers. Harley also wore a thin flannel under-vest, and, because his coat was worn open and the weather cold, a double belt of flannel—through all this the knife penetrated, piercing the breast-bone, and breaking off at the handle. Guiscard repeated the blow, not knowing the knife was broken, and inflicted a bruise with the hasp. Harley himself removed the blade, staunched his wound with Lord Poulett's handkerchief, and wrapped the blade up in his own.

The Dukes of Ormonde and Newcastle drew their swords, and wounded Guiscard in several places. St. John grappled with the Frenchman, and then ran out to call a surgeon ; and hastened on to St. James's to acquaint Mrs. Masham, but found her dining out. He sought out the Scotch doctor, and went with him to tell

the Queen. At first she thought they were hiding from her that Harley was dead. The secretary's wound was dressed at the Cockpit, and he returned home in a sedan chair; he lay some time ill, but eventually recovered. Guiscard died of his wounds in prison. This attempt against Harley's life induced a fear that a plot was afoot, so guards were doubled at St. James's, and every precaution taken. Shortly after, Harley was raised to the peerage, with the title of Earl of Oxford.

In the meantime the Duke of Marlborough, who had sailed the previous February, was prosecuting his campaign abroad. On hearing of the outrage, he wrote the following letter to the Queen: <sup>1</sup>—

*"27th March 1711.*

"MADAME,—It was with great horror that I received the account by the post from Mr. Secretary St. John of Mon. de Guiscard's villanous attempt on the life of Mr. Harley at the Council. I think it is a great mercy that he had not the liberty he desired of speaking to your Majesty. I beg you will never permit anybody to speak to you alone but such who are known to be well affect'd, and in whom your Majesty may entirely trust, for France is capable of any Villany to compass their ends. As I do with all my heart and soul wish your Majesty a long and happy life, so I shall venture mine freely for the sake of making yours safe and easy.—Being, with great truth and respect, Madam, your Majesty's most dutyfull subject and servant,

"MARLBOROUGH."

"The duke's authority," says the duchess, "was now diminished and his forces weakened, many of the best regiments being drawn off, some to moulder away

<sup>1</sup> Original letter in possession of John Thane, Esq. A copy in British Museum.

in Spain, and others to be sacrificed in the wild expedition to Quebec." Marlborough was, however, successful in reducing the garrison of Bouchain in twenty days, this being considered a difficult feat.

The new Tory Ministry had been carrying on negotiations for peace with France, much to the alarm of the States of Holland, who sent over Buys, their special envoy, to England, in order to remonstrate with the Government, but without effect. It was arranged that a general conference should take place at Utrecht, passports being granted to the French minister and others.

The Earl of Strafford and the Bishop of Bristol were the English plenipotentiaries. The latter was attended by three members of Parliament, four pages, and twelve footmen in livery. On ceremonious occasions the bishop wore a velvet gown, richly covered with gold loops, having a long train to be borne up by two pages in ash-coloured coats, with silver braces and green velvet waistcoats. One coach with eight horses, and five coaches with six horses, were provided to accommodate the party.

A Mr. Watkins, writing to Mr. John Drummond from the Hague on the 13th November, mentions attending the conference at Lord Strafford's. He thought the meeting could not have been pleasing to the Duke of Marlborough, the subject discussed being the State's demand for passports to enable the French plenipotentiary to treat of peace. Mr. Watkins, evidently a political opponent, adds: "You frightened my Lady Duchess terribly by telling her my Lord was to continue here all the winter. I suppose she is afraid he should keep out of harm's way (political mischief). I am glad her magnificent housekeeping this summer has given occasion for issuing some of her treasure, but do verily believe her meat is his poyson."

Peace was not concluded for another year. It was



signed on the 19th January 1713. Meanwhile France had several successes, and the allies were left to make the best terms they could.

The Duke of Marlborough returned to England in the middle of November. Although the Ministry and a great part of the nation were now blind to his merit, this was not the case with the allies, who acknowledged their successes were due to his conduct and courage—one "whose character they adored, and whose memory they still revere."

On Marlborough's return, his enemies were determined to bring scandal on his name. In the debates that followed, it was insinuated that Marlborough had continued the war for his own glorification. The great general in defence declared upon his conscience he was always desirous of a safe, honourable, and lasting peace, and that all proposals from the enemy had been submitted to the Queen. After this, the commissioners appointed by Government for examining public accounts discovered the duke had received an annual sum of £400 or £500 upon the bread contracts. He defended himself from this charge by stating that no money was allowed for gaining information in the field, and that it had been expended in this way. His enemies were not satisfied with this explanation, and he was prosecuted and ordered to refund the money.

While this matter was in debate, the Queen called upon the Duke of Marlborough to resign, which he accordingly did, sending a letter to her Majesty by the hand of his daughter, Lady Sunderland, known as "the little Whig." His resignation was followed by those of his two daughters, who were about the court.

A little later Prince Eugene of Savoy, whose arrival had long been expected, paid the English court a visit. One of the royal yachts, commanded by

Captain Desborough, was sent to fetch him over. He was accompanied by Count de la Corfana, Count Nassau Wonderburgh, the Chevalier de Savoy, the prince's nephew, a son of the Count de Soissons, and his Highness's adjutant-general, the Baron de Hohendorf. A royal barge in the charge of Mr. Drummond met him at Gravesend, and landed him at Whitehall incognito, when the prince at once repaired to Leicester House. He notified his arrival the same evening to the officers of state, who soon after waited upon him; among them the Duke of Marlborough, of whose disgrace the prince had heard on landing. Mr. Drummond, it was reported, represented to the prince that the less he saw of the duke the better. His Highness was surprised at such an admonition, and replied, "The ministers may depend upon it, I shall not cabal against them; but I hope they do not expect me to forbear my usual familiarity with my good friend the Duke of Marlborough."

Prince Eugene had come on a mission—to raise a loan in favour of the Emperor Charles of Austria for the continuance of the war; but this was not agreeable to the Queen and her advisers, so he was unsuccessful in his object. However, he had no reason to be dissatisfied with his reception, as the nobility vied with each other in order to show him honour. Harley, now Earl of Oxford, said when he dined with him, "That he looked upon that day as the happiest in the whole course of his life, since he had the honour to see in his house the greatest captain of the age."<sup>1</sup> Upon which his Highness smartly answered, "If this is the case, it is wholly owing to your lordship that it is so," implying that Harley was the author of the Duke of Marlborough's

<sup>1</sup> Twenty-three years later the Duchess of Marlborough had occasion to write to Prince Eugene. She uses almost the same expression, saying he "the greatest general this age has produced." See Appendix VII.

disgrace, and had freed him from the only rival who could come in competition with him for military glory.<sup>1</sup>

We read in a gossip letter of the period that Prince Eugene decorated six ladies and six gentlemen with an Order ; of these, four were the Duke of Marlborough's daughters, the other two ladies were the Duchess of Bolton and Lady Berkeley. One side of the medal represented Cupid with a sword in one hand and a faun in the other, and on the reverse side Cupid with a bottle and a sword run through it, with a motto, *L'un n'empêche pas l'autre*.

<sup>1</sup> Dumont, History.

## CHAPTER X

### UNDER QUEEN ANNE

(1712-1714)

"Where I am, the great and noble  
Tell me of renown and fame,  
And the red wine sparkles highest  
To do honour to my name.

Where I am all think me happy,  
For so well I play my part ;  
None can guess, who smile around me,  
How far distant is my heart."

IN the autumn of 1712, the duchess had the pain of losing two dear friends, who both died at her house near St. Albans. The first was Mr. Maynwaring, who had long acted as her secretary, keeping her informed of proceedings in Parliament and offering her sound political advice. He died in September, and in November he was followed to the grave by Lord Godolphin, aged sixty-seven, who caught cold while walking in the gardens at Holywell. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, a monument being erected there to his memory by his daughter-in-law, Henrietta. Sarah had often sought his advice during her husband's absence abroad ; the pity was she did not always follow it. Her temper no doubt tried him sometimes, but he never "swerved from his staunch friendship for them both," and in return they had a deep affection for him. His death greatly affected the duke, already disturbed by other worries. He therefore determined to absent himself

from England. Accordingly, he left for the Continent at the end of November 1712.

On arriving at Ostend, the captain of the packet-boat hoisted the ensign, as a signal that his Grace was on board, whereupon a salute was fired by the town, and another on his entering the harbour. The Duke of Marlborough was received on landing by the governor, and escorted to the burgomaster's, where he stayed the night. The next day he set out for Antwerp, where a banquet was given in his honour. From there he travelled by the most private roads to Maestricht. Cavalry detachments were stationed along the road, by order of the governor of Maestricht, to await his coming and to escort him into the town. On the duke's arrival there on the evening of the 19th December, amid the thunder of cannon, the streets, lined by the garrison under arms, were illuminated with lanterns, as is recorded in the archives of that town.

On the duke's departure for Aix-la-Chapelle, early in January, as much respect was paid him as on his arrival at Maestricht. The country people flocked to behold the "Preserver of the Empire," and people of every nation bestowed their blessings on the hero and their execrations on his enemies. They were full of astonishment at his appearance, and said, "His looks, his air, and his address were full as conquering as his sword."

In the archives of the town of Aix-la-Chapelle are to be found several minutes of the town council relating to the Duke of Marlborough's visit. It appears it had been proposed to send a Dutch detachment of 300 men from Maestricht to mount guard and occupy the posts, to ensure the safety of the Duke of Marlborough, the whole country being in a very unsettled state. This suggestion was submitted to the authorities



at Aix-la-Chapelle, but "the honourable Small Council decided it was too much responsibility to accept so many foreign troops without first consulting "the honourable Grand Council." The latter therefore assembled on January 8 to discuss the proposal. It was determined to send two deputies to General Von Topff at Maestricht, to make arrangements with him about the guards.

Two days later the council reassembled at Aix-la-Chapelle to hear the deputies' report. They brought word that the general only intended sending a sergeant or corporal with one or two men unarmed to view the city gates, and prevent dangerous characters from entering. The council agreed to this proposal.

The duke's stay at Aix-la-Chapelle on this occasion could not have been lengthy, as he writes from Maestricht on February 13, 1713, to the duchess, thanking her sincerely for her kindness in proposing to join him, and suggests taking her to Frankfort with as little delay as possible, as few conveniences were available at Maestricht. He writes, "I fear you will not be able to come until we get to some place where we may be settled for some time, so that we may be in a methodical and orderly way of living, and if you are then contented, I shall have nothing to trouble me." In another letter the following, "When you go to Brussels, I desire that you will give yourself the trouble of going to see the hangings at Mr. de Blois; you may do it in half-an-hour, when they get the dinner ready. Cadogan has arranged to send me an express as soon as you land, by which he may give him two lines.—I am, ever yours, M."

On leaving, the Duchess of Marlborough gave him some very valuable presents and several fine diamonds, rings and other jewels of great value to her friends. Garth, who had probably attended Lord Godolphin in

last illness, received one. The duchess joined the duke at Maestricht before the end of February. Writing from there to Mr. Jennens, her friend and correspondent, Sarah thanked him for accompanying her as far as Dover, telling him she reached Ostend a few hours after leaving him. General Cadogan, at the duke's request, met her there, and sent an express to the duke with news of her safe arrival. After a short stay at Maestricht the duke and duchess paid a visit to Aix-la-Chapelle, then set out for their principality of Mindelheim, in Suabia, given to the duke by the late Emperor Joseph I.<sup>1</sup> This was a long journey. On their return they stayed some time in Frankfort, and from there they went to Antwerp, everywhere being received with great honour and respect. The duchess was much gratified with the duke's reception, and compared it to the treatment he received in his own country. She writes from Frankfort :—

“I am just come from a window from which I saw a great many Troops pass that were under the command of Prince Eugene ; they paid all the Respects as they went by to the Duke of Marlborough as if he had been in his old post. The men looked very well, and had buckram and French pieces on, which they march with, I suppose, to use them so that it may be more easy in the day of battle. They had green bows in their hats, which is their mark of war ; the French they say have white paper, on which they write their conditions.”

In this letter, written to Mr. Jennens, Sarah tells him she had received a visit from the Elector of Miance (Mayence), who paid her many compliments on the

<sup>1</sup> This principality was lost when the Elector of Bavaria recovered his dominions.

Duke of Marlborough's services, and said that all the Electors and the King of Prussia had decided to assist the Emperor as much as was in their power in the war. Sarah says of the Elector, "His shape is like my own, a little of the fatest, but in all my Life I never saw a face that expressed so much openness, Honesty, Sense, and good nature." She found that Frankfort had few conveniences of life, although it was considered a first-rate town. Their house, one of the best, had no garden, and "but one place that one can make a fire in; the weather is so cold (May) we are half starved, for their manner is Stoves, which is intolerable and makes my head so uneasy that I can't bear it."

Sarah longs to be in a "clean, sweet house," though ever so small. "For here," she writes, "there is nothing of the kind, and though in the gardens th' hedges are green and pretty, the Sand that goes over one's shoes is so disagreeable, that I love to walk in the roads and the Fields better. The Duke of Marlborough and I go constantly in the afternoon, stop the coach and go out wherever we see a place that looks hard and clean. T'other day we were walking upon the road, and a gentleman and his lady went by in their chariot, who we had never seen before, and after passing us with the usual civilitys, in a quarter of an hour or less they bethought themselves and turned back, came out of their coach to us, and desired we would go into their garden, which was very near that place, desiring us to accept of a key. This is only a little *tast* of the civility of people abroad."

At Aix-la-Chapelle, in March 1713, the duchess amused herself in visiting churches and nunneries, where she heard "of so many marvels and saw such ridiculous things as would be incredible" if she related them. In one church she describes how "there were twenty-seven

jolly-faced priests that had nothing to do but to say Mass for the living and take the dead souls sooner out of Purgatory by their prayers." In the following July she visited Mechlin, to see an extraordinary procession that had attracted over 30,000 people to that town. At Frankfort, on St. John's day, she saw a procession of little children dressed in lamb-skins with girdles, to which were attached small bowls of milk; from these they drank as they walked along. Sarah, writing to Mrs. Clayton about the same time, describes a religious procession she saw. She does not mention the place; it was probably Aix-la-Chapelle.

"There were several great things drawn by horses; the first represented a stable, and the Virgin Mary sat by it with a child on her lap; the second pageant was the Virgin again upon an ass, with a child in her arms, and Joseph leading it; then immediately following was our Saviour discoursing with the doctors. The other four machines represented the Passion of our Saviour, all which is the most impious thing one can imagine to see carried about the streets. There were a great many figures carried about in rich clothes which I believe (represented) Jews; then came the Virgin with a great many fine attendants in great ceremony, with a new long train of fine stuff and many jewels of value; last of all the Sacrament, with such a thing over it (canopy) as the Queen had at the coronation; a vast number of wax lights at noonday, several bagpipes playing, but notwithstanding that merriment all the people fell on their knees before it in the street as it passed by! 'Tis said the bishop of this place will not suffer the procession to be made any more."

The duchess also went to see a religious play held twice a week in the playhouse. She writes, "All the Scripture repeated, and a great deal added to it, the

sacrament is given, and the same words used that are in our church, and the whole thing most impious."

Sarah's correspondence with Mr. Jennens,<sup>1</sup> who sometimes transacted business for her and the duke, tells us something of her life and a good deal of her opinions. Some of these letters are written in cypher. At that time no correspondence was safe. Lord Carlisle, Sir Horace Walpole, and Lord Bolingbroke also used cyphers. The duchess called the cabal against her the "sorcerers," and Harley the "sorcerer." Louis XIV. was her particular *bête noire*, and, speaking of him, says, "But to be sure, nothing can stand before the King of France long; if England continues to assist him, and as long as this Ministry continues, I think there is no doubt that England will act what is most for the advantage of France in all things, which must certainly a little sooner or later bring in the Prince of Wales." Curiously, Louis's opinion concurred with Sarah's; for, writing to his envoy in London, he said, "The affair of displacing the Duke of Marlborough will do for us all we can desire."

Sarah mentions an interview, in July 1713, with a Roman Catholic gentleman, who was expecting the restoration of the Stuarts, and who told her the plans were so well laid that they could not fail, and tried to persuade her as a friend to bring the Duke of Marlborough into it. The duchess replied, "The Duke of Marlborough has done so much for the cause of liberty, and for the good of England, I had much rather have him suffer upon that account than change sides, for that would look as if what he did at the revolution was not for justice, as it really was, but to comply with the times."

In the following spring the duke and duchess had the great sorrow of losing their beloved daughter, the Duchess

<sup>1</sup> "Letters of the Duchess of Marlborough, from MSS. at Madresfield Court." Published 1875.



of Bridgewater. She died at the early age of twenty-six. Sarah, writing from abroad to Mr. Jennens, mentions her loss in these words, "The loss of my dear child is indeed very terrible to me, tho' I know there is a great many reasonable and true things to be said upon such sad occasions, and that one ought to remember the blessings that are yet left. That she is happier I don't doubt than in such a world as this, where time generally passes away in trifling in things that are tedious, and in many frights for what may happen, which is yet worse, . . . but all the arguments that I can possibly think of can't hinder me from lamenting as long as I live the loss of what I had so much reason to love, as I had my dear child, who had a perfect good mind and everything I could have wished in her."

Elizabeth is buried at Little Gaddesdon, in Hertfordshire.

Four months later the duchess came across a brother of Lord Lonsdale's at Frankfort, and successfully nursed him through the small-pox. She relates to Mr. Jennens the remedies she used. No doubt this illness brought back to her mind the deathbed of her son.

While at Frankfort, Sarah met Mr. Hutchinson, to whom she subsequently wrote an account of her grievances, wishing to vindicate herself from "unjust aspersions that have been," says Sarah, "publicly made of me, contrary not only to truth and justice, but all sense of decency and humanity."

The duchess had been accused of disposing of titles and employments, and of managing the privy purse to her own advantage, also of being hard on the tradespeople; her method to prevent cheating being disapproved of.

It had formerly been the custom to pay officials for the privilege of serving royalty, when the tradespeople

had to charge high prices. The duchess's way was to pay ready money, and not to accept "poundage," or allow commission. "Those who had the honour," says Sarah, "to see the Queen, and make her cloaths, had more than double what they had from the first quality, and that was all I could allow of in an office where I was so entirely trusted. I always signed the tradesmen's bills at the same time that they delivered me their goods, to prevent mistakes and abuse, and they were paid by Mrs. Thomas, a woman of whose honesty I had great experience, to whom I gave employment of being chief of the robes, with a salary of £300 a year, telling her not to take commission, and to say she was serving the Queen and was well paid. I am confident she followed this direction as long as I was in the office, where she is continued still."

To confirm this statement it must be pointed out that Harley's brother, the auditor of the exchequer, having collected the accounts for the previous forty years, and compared them with the duchess's, found she had saved the crown £100,000 in nine years. The privy purse, out of which many pensions were paid, had been £20,000 a year. Two years before the duchess's dismissal it was raised to £26,000 a year. Sarah took receipts for all money disbursed, even to the amounts paid to the Queen herself. Mr. Coggs, the goldsmith, who lived near St. Clement's Church, cashed the duchess's notes, and he was ordered not to charge any "poundage." Sarah considered it "mean and barbarous" in her circumstances to be the better of anybody to whom she paid money. She declares she never took a penny for any employment in her gift, and once refused a bribe of £6000 to make Mr. Coke a peer, although he was a very suitable person. Two pages of the backstairs whom Anne, when princess, was advised to part with, as they were Roman Catholics,

were each paid £400; one had spent that amount to obtain his situation, and the other was an old servant, formerly a footman, and "that would have been," says Sarah, "pretence enough to have disposed of his place to my own profit if I had loved money so extremely as I have been represented to do."

The former footman was so grateful for his £400, that whenever her Grace was about to travel he appeared at her coach door to wish her health and happiness, and this he continued to do for twenty-five years.

While the duke and duchess were abroad, Marlborough House was painted and decorated, the work being undertaken by M. de la Guerre, who received £500 for his services. The following letters of Sarah's to Mr. Jennens give us some details:—

*"October 29, 1713.*

"I writ to you so very lately and I should not trouble you now, but that Sir Godfrey Kneller has writ to me to desire you will give Mr. la Guerre £100 more, which he says will make £250 upon his finishing the Hall, and he said it would be don in a Week.

"He adds that the great staircase is about half don, and he commends his Performance so much that I have got the Dk. of Marlborough's leave to write to you, that you would please to order him a hundred Pounds."

And in another letter:—

"I believe it will be more necessary now to hinder M. la Guerre from painting than to press him to it, for I am told that in dark dusky atmosphere it is not good to work, that the Painting in damp weather will not hold nor is ever good. Some person has writ me word that the figures in the Hall are well of the kind,

but that the Battles, which are small and at a great distance, are not strong enough painted to be well seen. If this is rightly judged, I am sure you will do what you can to have it mended and prevent the same fault upon the staircase, for they will be seen much more than the hall."

Sarah, writing to her son-in-law, Lord Godolphin, refers to Sir Godfrey Kneller and says, "He writes nothing of making likenesses of the officers; many of them are dead, and it would not be easy to those that are in the service to sitt. And I believe much might be said which makes it better not to aim at anything more than representing battles." It would appear the duke had wished to decorate his house with portraits of his officers, but it was found impracticable. The idea may have been suggested from seeing the collection of portraits of admirals that William III. had made at Kensington Palace.

During their stay on the Continent, rumours had reached the duke and duchess of the Queen's precarious health and the unsatisfactory state of things in England. The Queen was torn between parties and factions and the jealousies of her ministers. People became alarmed at the total removal of all the Whigs in the Government, because it was known that both Bolingbroke and Lady Masham were Jacobites at heart and had intrigued with France. The supporters of the Protestant succession held secret consultations. These were presided over by the Hanoverian resident, who suggested to the Lord Chancellor that a writ should be issued to enable the Electoral Prince of Hanover to have a seat in the House of Lords as the Duke of Cambridge. The Queen was much offended with Baron Schutz for not first applying to her. She forbade him

the court, and wrote to the Electress Sophia and also to Prince George of Hanover complaining that this proposal had been made without consulting her, saying his advent would be dangerous to the tranquillity of the kingdom. These letters were published in England to inform the Hanoverian party why the Duke of Cambridge had postponed coming to England. The Electress soon after expired of an apoplectic fit; she was a granddaughter of James I. by his daughter Elizabeth, who married Frederick, King of Bohemia.

Harley, who had quarrelled with Lady Masham and his former friend Bolingbroke, had gone over to the Whig party. On the 9th July Parliament was prorogued till 10th August. The Queen's constitution was now entirely destroyed; anxiety of mind having aggravated her bodily ailments. The dissensions of her ministers were so frequent and were carried to such an extent, that they met solely with a desire to oppose each other. Lady Masham had succeeded in undermining Harley's influence with the Queen, and on the 27th of July Harley found himself deprived of the treasurer's staff, when an open quarrel took place between the fallen minister, Lady Masham, and the Lord Chancellor in the Queen's presence. Harley said, "He had been wronged and abused by lies and misrepresentations, but he should be revenged, and leave some people as low as he found them!" This greatly shocked the invalid Queen, and made her suspect that she had been abused and duped by one, if not all three, of her servants.

It had such an effect upon her that she took to her bed; the gout from which she was suffering flew to her head, to the alarm of her physicians. Cupping somewhat relieved her, and she passed a fairly good night on Thursday, 29th July. The following morning, feeling pretty well, she rose and had her hair combed, then



began to walk about her room. Mrs. Danvers, noticing that her Majesty's looks were fixed upon the clock, inquired what she saw more than ordinary? The Queen's only reply was to turn her head, and her dazed expression frightened Mrs. Danvers, who called for help. The physicians bled her Majesty, and she rallied for a time, but towards evening was again seized with drowsiness, which ended in unconsciousness.

The Duchess of Ormonde, seeing the Queen in such an anxious state, sent to inform the duke, her husband. The council immediately assembled at Kensington to elect a Lord Treasurer, and the choice fell on the Duke of Shrewsbury. The physicians had continued to administer medicines to the Queen, one of which, proposed by Dr. Meade, had the effect of restoring her senses and her speech. This was made known to the council. The Lord Chancellor and a few lords accompanied the Duke of Shrewsbury to inform her Majesty of the opinion of her council, upon which she said, "They could not recommend a person she liked better for the post." The Queen gave the staff into his hand, and bade him use it for the good of the people. The duke would have returned the Lord Chamberlain's staff, but Anne begged him to keep that also. He therefore held for a short time three of the greatest offices under the Crown, that of Lord Treasurer, Lord Chamberlain, and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

The Queen soon relapsed into a lethargic sleep, from which she never fully recovered. Steps were taken by the Privy Council for the proclamation of the new king, as soon as Anne should be no more. Her death took place at 7 A.M. on Sunday, August 1, in her forty-ninth year. She never revived sufficiently to receive the sacrament or sign her will, in which she left legacies to her servants and gave directions about her burial.

Queen Anne, although wanting in firmness of character, so essential to a sovereign, was an excellent, generous, and good woman. Some think if she had been left to her own good intentions she would have ranked among the best of our rulers. She was, however, too indolent to have done much on her own initiative. Her memory is revered because she had "the peace, happiness, and prosperity of her people at heart," and she will always be known as "Good Queen Anne."

## CHAPTER XI

### WHEN GEORGE I. WAS KING

(1714-1722)

"Yet time, who changes all, had altered him  
In soul and aspect as in age : years steal  
Fire from the mind as vigour from the limb,  
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim."

As soon as the Queen's death became known, Dr. Tenison, Archbishop of Canterbury, went to the Privy Council, and produced a deed from the Elector of Hanover, nominating several lords to the regency. The Duke of Marlborough was not among these, possibly because he was absent from the kingdom when it was drawn up. Orders were immediately issued by the council proclaiming his Electoral Highness King of England, Scotland, and Ireland, under the title of George I.

The sudden death of the Queen, and the prompt measures taken by the council, upset the plans of the Jacobite party, and saved the nation from a civil war. The Earl of Dorset was sent to Hanover to announce to George I. his accession to the throne. His Majesty does not appear to have been in any hurry to take up his new duties, and it has been surmised that he preferred to postpone his arrival till after the funeral of his predecessor, which did not take place until the 24th August, when the late queen was laid to rest in Henry VII.'s chapel in Westminster Abbey, by the side of her husband. The King contented himself with sending

orders that Viscount Bolingbroke should be removed from the post of secretary. This had already been done, and Mr. Addison appointed in his place. Bolingbroke was "obliged to stand at the door of the council chamber with his bag of papers, and underwent various kinds of mortification,"<sup>1</sup> the Dukes of Shrewsbury and Somerset, with Lord Cowper, having taken the seals from him, and locked and sealed up the door of his office.

Towards the end of July 1714 the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough had made preparations for their return to England. The reason of their leaving Antwerp is uncertain. It was reported the duke had been invited over by Harley and Bolingbroke, who had made him great promises. Contrary winds detained the duke and duchess a fortnight at Ostend. They landed at Dover on 1st August, the very day that Queen Anne died. Unaware of this event, they were received by the mayor and jurats of the town amid great rejoicings, a salvo of artillery being fired from the platform. They were entertained that night by Sir Robert Furness—where the news of the Queen's death reached them; from thence they proceeded to Sittingbourne, attended by a great many gentlemen. At the express desire of several of the nobility and others, the duke reluctantly consented to enter London in some state. In a way it was obligatory, for Sir Charles Cox, the member for Southwark, met him on horseback, attended by 200 gentlemen and distinguished citizens. His sons-in-law and others of the nobility and gentry followed in their coaches, many of them with six horses, the whole making a handsome procession. The duke's coach broke down at Temple Bar, no one, fortunately, receiving any injury, and the duke and duchess proceeded in another carriage, escorted by a company of the City Guards. Before leaving, the

<sup>1</sup> Barnard's "Complete History."

escort fired a salute. Everywhere people had crowded to see his Grace, shouting, "Long live King George! Long live the Duke of Marlborough!" and some also exclaimed, "Long live King John and Queen Sarah, the protectors of England!"<sup>1</sup>

Metcalfe Graham, writing to James Graham in August, says, "The Duke of Marlborough came in yesterday with all pomp imaginable. The City gave him guards. He wants to see you mightily. The Duchess bids me tell you while she breathes she will be your friend, for your kindness to them and Lord Godolphin." This message of Sarah's was very characteristic. On another occasion the duchess wrote to Mr. Jennens, "This I can truly say, that I am sure nobody ever went two steps to serve me, but I would go ten to return it."

The day after the Duke of Marlborough's return, the foreign ministers, and a great number of the nobility and gentry, as well as military officers, visited him at his house. Bothmar, the Hanoverian minister, apologised for the omission of the duke's name from among those chosen for the regency. The duke listened courteously, but said little. Immediately on Bothmar's departure Sarah implored her husband on her knees never to accept any employment under the new Government, pointing out that he had a greater fortune than he wanted, and that a man in his position, who was so highly esteemed, could be of more use to a court than they could be to him, using many arguments to convince him. Sarah finally said, "I will live civilly with them if they are so to me, but will never put it into the power of any King to use me ill." The duke assured her he would only take office if he, by so doing, could further the interests of his country.

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Athole Papers.



The movements of both duke and duchess at this time are given in the following letter from the duchess to Mr. Jennens :—

“WINDSOR LODGE, *August 10th, 1714.*

“I have received the favour of yours of the 31st of July and that of the 6th of August, for which I give you many thanks. I would have acknowledged them in London, but I stayed so little there, that I was in a great hurry, and even here I have not the time to say what I ought for so many obliging friendships as I have received from you. Friday we shall be at the Bath two or three days, and about as long at Woodstock; after that we go to St. Albans, from thence to London, when 'tis time for Lord Marlborough to wait upon the King. Hoping to see you at St. Albans, but upon so much uncertainty, I don't know whether it would be best that I should have patience till we come to London. However, I will give you notice when we shall be at St. Albans by a letter from Woodstock that you may do what will be more easy to yourself, which I ought to consider upon all occasions more than mine own satisfaction.”

A few months before, Sarah wrote to Mr. Jennens from Antwerp :—

“If you should have a mind to take the air when you happen to be in the spleen, and can't bear company, I beg of you to go and see my Lodge in Windsor Great Park, where you will find a very clean place and everything that is convenient, and nobody but a housemaid, the gardener, and the keepers, that will ride to fetch you anything you want at Windsor, and when the court is not there, it is of all places that ever I was in the most agreeable to me.”

In another letter to Mr. Jennens, dated St. Albans, 22nd August, the duchess says that since she last wrote from Windsor on 10th August, she had been to Bath and Woodstock, and was greatly tired from her travels, and had scarcely been alone except to sleep. "I don't know," she writes, "how long I shall stay at this place; but if you are well, and were at Liberty to come to us, I hope I need not tell you how glad I should be to see you and dear Mrs. Jennens, if she can content herself with such conveniences as I can make in this poor Habitation, which, however ordinary, I could not part with for any that I have seen in all my travels."

During the summer she kept open house at Holywell, near St. Albans; but although her entertainments were "very noble and fine," they failed in reviving her position in society, for the simple reason that, as she had no longer any power, she was no longer made up to—a way of the world. "If you had lived so two or three years ago," the duchess was bluntly told by one of her guests, "it might have signified something, but now it will signify nothing."

As long as the duchess was at court, she probably had quite sufficient society and was glad of the rest and quiet of home. She says in one of her letters, "I used to run from the court and shut myself up six weeks in one of my Country Houses quite alone, which makes me now remember Mr. Cowley, who says, 'Tis very fantastical and contradictory in human nature that people are generally thought to love themselves better than the rest of the world, and yet never can endure to be with themselves.'"

The very fact of having left the court would make her desire to entertain her friends and acquaintances, so as not to drop out of all remembrance.

Sarah was beloved by her own people at Sandridge

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and neighbourhood, for Dr. Hare mentions how much struck he was by the easy manner in which she lived there. These are his words, "I was always charmed with your Grace's many and great excellences, and if it be possible being with you at St. Albans has added to the veneration I had before for you, being infinitely pleased to see the easy manner in which you lived with all about you and knew when to lay aside state and ceremony."

The King set out from Herrenhausen, accompanied by the young Elector, his son, on the 31st of August. He arrived at the Hague on the 5th September and embarked on the 16th. The following barges were sent to Gravesend to meet the King and convey him to Greenwich :—

The King's shallop.	The navy six-oared barge.
The King's twelve-oared barge.	The master's six-oared barge.
The King's six-oared barge.	The master's four-oared barge.
The treasury of the navy eight-oared barge	The admiralty six-oared barge.
Office of the ordnance eight-oared barge.	Sir Wm. Wyndham's four-oared barge.

On landing at Greenwich his Majesty walked to the palace, escorted by the Earl of Northampton and his troop of Life Guards, and attended by the lords of the regency and an immense crowd of rejoicing people.<sup>1</sup>

The Duke of Marlborough was one of the first to be greeted by his Majesty, as will be seen by the following letter :—

RICHARD BARRETT *to* DACRE BARRETT at Belpus.

"RUSSELL STREET, *September* 1714.

"After I parted from you I went to Gravesend and saw the King pass . . . there, and afterwards went to

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Portland MSS.





*King George I.  
From the original painting by Sir H. Kneller  
in the National Portrait Gallery.*





led his Majesty into, some nights ago, when about nine or ten at night he was going to this Mlle., who has a house in St. James Street next door to Lady Renelow, where this confidant knocked. The chair was carried in and opened, but the King saw the mistake, set himself down (again) and ordered it to the next house. Whether it proved a jest to him I don't hear, but a very good one it has bin to the Town, and this lady withal is very ugly."<sup>1</sup>

It is an error calling the lady "Mlle. Kilmansegge." She was the wife of the baron of that name, Master of the Horse to the King. Apartments were found for him at Somerset House, a good many pensioners there being turned out to make room for George's suite.

The Princess of Wales, Caroline of Anspach, and her daughters arrived in the beginning of October, and on the 20th the King was crowned, one month from the day of his entering London. There were great rejoicings, although not wholly free from rioting, which was attributed to the rejected Tories.

At the first drawing-room the princess held, all were charmed with her conversation. She spoke English fluently, addressed herself to each lady in turn, and was never at a loss for words or subject. Her dress, very different from the fashion in England, was worn high. She had abundance of fair hair, loaded with flakes of powder. The princess was a good deal taller than her husband.

During these rejoicings, no one thought of George I.'s poor neglected and imprisoned Queen, Sophia Dorothea, who was languishing in a German fortress, the innocent victim of a vile conspiracy. Her place was taken by

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Coke MSS.

two inferior and unattractive persons, one of whom had a great influence over the King. These two ladies were nicknamed "The May Pole" and "The Elephant and Castle," as they were a complete contrast to one another. Madame Schulenberg was ridiculously thin, while the other, Madame de Kilmansegge, spoken of in the preceding letter, was absurdly fat, and both were ugly and old. In 1716 Madame Schulenberg became Duchess of Kendal, and her daughter by the King, who passed as her niece, was created Countess of Walsingham, and afterwards married the Earl of Chesterfield.

Both ladies were given apartments in St. James's Palace. The King spent his leisure hours, generally between five and eight, in their company. He amused himself cutting out figures in paper, and varied this employment by smoking a pipe. Count Broglio, the French ambassador, wrote to his royal master: "The King has no predilection for the English nation, and never receives in private any English of either sex; none even of his principal officers are admitted to his chamber in the morning to dress him, or in the evening to undress him. These offices are performed by the Turks, who are his *valets de chambre*, and who give him everything he wants in private."

These Turks, named Mustapha and Mahomet, had been taken prisoners of war some years before, and had ever since been attached to the Hanoverian court. Madame de Kilmansegge wrote from Hanover in December 1716 to Vice-Chamberlain Coke, thanking him for many civilities, saying she did not expect the King would be over before the middle of January; nor did she know whether he would go to Kensington or to St. James's. If the latter place, she desired her rooms left as they were. In regard to the furniture at Ken-

sington, the simplest would suffice, as the apartment was not good enough to be worth decorating; and besides, she preferred not to cause trouble and expense. She wished "the house" to be divided into three rooms, with a bed in each, and as many beds for servants as at St. James's.

Madame de Kilmansegge sent her compliments, and apologised for "the trouble she is giving," and "hopes soon to thank the Vice-Chamberlain by word of mouth, and to embrace Mrs. Coke."

In the new reign economy, not to say parsimony, seemed to have been practised; one reads in the correspondence with Vice-Chamberlain Coke, who seems to have borne the brunt of all complaints, that some of the household were given little better to eat than "garniture as cold fish, Salamon Gundy, and the like, so that really more than once we have had much ado to make a dinner."

The writer, one C. Dalton, says that never in either William III.'s or Queen Anne's time were they so treated. He also says that the number of candles allowed was so limited that, one council night, "the lords coming out ran their noses against the hangings. Nay," he continues, "the Duke of Kent refuses to give us a candle to light the King, which is my Lord Chamberlain's own candle, saying he goes in always privately." He ends by asking that all this may be represented to the Lord Chamberlain (Duke of Bolton), and begs that they may not be governed by the Board of Green Cloth.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as the first Parliament met, the Whigs began to call the late ministers to account for the part they took in the Treaty of Utrecht, which so alarmed Lord Bolingbroke, who had taken his seat,

<sup>1</sup> Coke MSS.

that he rode post haste to Dover and embarked for Calais.

He left a letter to defend his conduct, in which he said that he had done nothing but by his royal mistress's order; that he knew he could not expect a fair trial; and he felt assured his enemies intended to pursue him to the scaffold.

The Duke of Ormonde followed Bolingbroke to France, and gave the same reasons. Several members in the House of Lords voted against the impeachment of these lords on the grounds that their conduct did not amount to high treason, upon which Lord Coningsby stood up and said, "The worthy chairman has impeached the hand, but I impeach the head; he has impeached the clerk, and I the justice; he has impeached the scholar, and I the master. I impeach Robert, Earl of Oxford and Earl of Mortimer, of high treason and other crimes and misdemeanours."<sup>1</sup>

Harley's conscience may have been easier, or he was braver, for he stood his ground, and when others fled he remained. He was committed to the Tower; a large concourse of people followed, and much sympathy was shown him by the populace, riots and disorders being the result.

The want of statesmanship on the part of Queen Anne's Tory ministers, shown by the unpatriotic and underhand manner in which the Treaty of Utrecht had been carried out, and the party rancour of the opposite side in the subsequent proceedings, do honour to neither party. At the expiration of three months, as Lord Bolingbroke and the Duke of Ormonde had not surrendered themselves, Parliament accused them of high treason, and the House of Lords ordered the Earl-

<sup>1</sup> Barnard's "Complete History."



Marshal to erase their names and armorial bearings from the list of peers. Inventories were taken of their personal property, and the Duke of Ormonde's escutcheon as knight of the garter was removed from St. George's Chapel at Windsor. It has been regretted that so brave and generous a man as the Duke of Ormonde, who had committed no crime but that of having obeyed the orders of his Sovereign, should thus have been banished. In consequence, these two lords, being condemned unheard and attainted, were thrown into the arms of the Pretender. These impeachments were not calculated to make the Whig Government more popular.

The following year we read that Harley was very ill, and had to take "vast quantities of laudanum to relieve the pain he suffered." He was removed, on medical advice, to the private house of General Compton in the Tower.

After two years of confinement, the Earl of Oxford petitioned that his imprisonment might not be indefinite. On July 24, 1717, he was brought from the Tower by water for his trial in Westminster Hall. After a good many technical difficulties the trial proceeded, when, no one appearing to accuse him, he was unanimously acquitted of the charge of high treason, and an act of grace was accorded him.

Lord Oxford survived his release six years, dying in 1723. He left the nation his valuable collection of MSS., which had cost him several thousand pounds.

In the autumn of 1715-1716 a rising took place in Scotland in favour of the elder Pretender, but after a few months of fighting it was suppressed, and several Jacobite peers made prisoners; these were Lords Derwentwater, Kenmure, Nithsdale, Widdrington, Nairn,

I have been thinking of you very much lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you. I have been thinking of you very much lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you.

Lord Wintroun, receiving a great number of witnesses, expressed in the Tower all the great wrongs which he was brought to, and in the House of Lords. The next day, the proceedings of passing the commission appointing the Lord High Steward. While this was being done, the peers in their robes stood and waited. The prisoner who had been brought from the Tower by water was then placed in the one room, where, with the high court officers, and the rest of the bar and officers of the Lord Wintroun, waited for some time to bring witnesses, but after consulting the subject, this request was refused as frivolous. He was told to prepare his defence. On the trial recommencing the following day with the same ceremonies, Lord Wintroun was informed that the Lords were prepared to hear his defence. He had none to offer, nor any witnesses to bring forward. He was accordingly judged guilty, and ordered to the Tower. On the 10th March the Commons were summoned to hear judgment. In a long speech, the Lord High Steward announced that the prisoner had been judged guilty of

high treason, and an attempt to murder the Sovereign ; and the sentence upon him for this offence was that he should be hanged, drawn, and quartered. This barbarous sentence, mercifully, was never carried out, and after a few months of imprisonment Lord Wintoun was released.

This trial created a sensation, and many ladies attended as spectators, among these the Duchess of Marlborough, she having applied to her friend, Lord Manchester, for tickets during the temporary absence of the duke abroad.

On the 3rd of November 1717, the Princess of Wales gave birth to a son, who was the cause of a dispute between the prince and his royal parent. The Prince of Wales wished his uncle, the Duke of York, who was also Bishop of Osnaburgh, to stand godfather. The King insisted on appointing the Duke of Newcastle. After the christening, the prince spoke of the duke in insulting tones.

The King was displeased, and ordered his son to his apartments, and afterwards told him to quit the palace. Accordingly, the prince and princess retired to a house lent them by the Earl of Grantham, leaving their children at St. James's Palace. Early the following year the prince and princess moved to Leicester House, where Caroline formed a salon, which was much frequented by the clever men of the day. George I. appointed Lady Portland, widow of the second earl, governess to his grandchildren. He would not allow their parents to have the care of them.

One day the prince and princess came on a visit, naturally desiring to see their children alone. Lady Portland refused, expressing great regret, but stating it was against the King's orders. The prince flew into a great passion, and was about to kick her out of

the room, when fortunately the princess threw herself between them, and averted a catastrophe. Directly George II. succeeded to the throne, he hastened to dismiss Lady Portland. She was the ancestress of the Dutch branch of the Bentinck family.

The dispute between the royal father and son was much commented on and regretted. The Earl of Harborough wrote to the Duke of Rutland in May 1719 : "The Prince sent Lord Belhaven with his compliments to the King the day he went, and I hear his Majesty has sent to let him know he may come to his children. All this looks well. I wish from these steps an agreement may ensue."

Walpole, who had been returned to office in November 1719, endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation between the King and his heir, but it was some months before he succeeded. The Prince of Wales was received at St. James's Palace on 23rd April 1720, and the Guards were allowed to attend him on his departure, of which we are told in the following letter :—

*"23rd April 1720.*

"The King sent for the Prince, who, after some time with him, came out, when drums, trumpets, and colours were displayed, the usual ceremonies to the Prince of Wales. Guards attended him home, and to-morrow it is expected that the Court of St. James's and House of Lesterfield's will unite in one, to the great joy of all that love old England."<sup>1</sup>

We must now leave the court, and return to the movements of the Duchess of Marlborough and her family, with whom we are more particularly concerned.

<sup>1</sup> H.M.C., Dropmore MSS.



In the month of April 1715, the duchess lost a good friend in Bishop Burnet, who died at the age of seventy-two. He had retired some years from his see, and occupied his leisure writing the "History of His Own Times," which was published by his son after his death. He used to receive a few select friends, among these the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. Sarah was almost a daily visitor; they delighted in each other's conversation, although at times his want of tact annoyed her. The bishop's absence of mind was well known. When dining with the duchess, after Marlborough's fall, he compared the duke to Belisarius. "But," said the duchess eagerly, "how came it that such a man was so miserable and universally deserted?" "Oh, madam," exclaimed the distraught prelate, "he had such a brimstone of a wife!"

Bishop Burnet was an earnest, well-meaning man, but wanting in tact, as the above anecdote shows; he was unpopular, and inclined to be a busybody. He it was who waited outside Kensington Palace when William III. was ill, and on receiving intimation that he had breathed his last, hastened to announce to Anne her accession to the throne. There was something almost comic in the worthy divine footing it in wig and gown with the utmost speed to be the first to announce the good news! The custom then was for no clergyman to appear in the street, or in his own house when dressed for the day, without a black gown. The following lines were found on a tombstone written in chalk some little time before Burnet died. They are attributed to Swift, whom, it is said, took immense pains to conceal his identity, and travelled many miles from the spot in haste. The finder, delighted at the spiteful and untrue but amusing lines, distributed copies among



his friends. They are to be found in MSS. in several private collections :—

“ Here Sarum lyes, of late as wise,  
 As learned as your Aquinus,  
 Yet to be sure he was no more  
 A Christian than Socinus.  
 Oaths pro and con he swallowed down,  
 Loved gold like any layman ;  
 Wrote, preached, and prayed, and yet betrayed  
 His Mother Church for Mammon.  
 Of every vice he had a spice,  
 Yet though a precious prelate,  
 He lived and died, if not belyed,  
 A true dissenting zealot.  
 If such a soul to heaven is stole,  
 And 'scaped old Satan's clutches,  
 We may presume there will be room  
 For Marlborough and his Dutchess ! ”

Early in 1716 the duke and duchess sustained a great affliction in the death of their beloved daughter, Anne, who died at Althorpe in March. Her husband had succeeded his father as third Earl of Sunderland two years after their marriage.

Although devoted to her husband, Lady Sunderland's last years were embittered by anxiety respecting their children, for whom he had made no suitable provision. She wrote a touching letter to her husband expressing her wishes a short time before her death, begging him not to live beyond his means and to refrain from gambling. She desired that her mother should take charge of her girls, and also of the boys if they were left too young to go to school. “ For the love that she has for me and the duty that I have shown her, I hope she will do it, and be ever kind to you, who was dearer to me than my life.” She mentions that her father had provided for her children ; and she begs her husband will give their eldest

son the interest on the £5000 that was her own fortune. This letter was immediately after her death forwarded to Sarah, who lost no time in announcing her readiness to comply with her dear daughter's request, as follows:—

*"13<sup>th</sup> May 1716.*

"I send you enclosed that most precious letter you sent me yesterday by Mr. Charlton. You will easily believe it has made me drop a great many tears, and you may be sure that to my life's end I shall observe very religiously all that my poor dear child desired. I was pleased to find that my own inclinations had led me to resolve upon doing everything that she mentions before I knew it was her request, except taking Lady Anne, which I did not offer, thinking that since you take Lady Frances home, who is eighteen years old, she would be better with you than with me as long as you live, or with the servants her dear mother had chosen to put about her, and I found by Mr. Charlton this thought was the same that you had. But I will be of all the use I can to her in everything that she wants me, and if I should happen to live longer than you, though so much older, I will then take as much care of her as if she were my own child. I have resolved to take poor Lady (Anne) Egerton, who, I believe, is very ill looked after. She went yesterday to Ashridge, but I will send for her to St. Albans as soon as you will let me have dear Lady Dye; and, while the weather is hot, I will keep them too, and Lady Herriot (Godolphin) with a little family of servants to look after them, and be there as much as I can; but the Duke of Marlborough will be running up and down to several places this summer w  
carry children, and I don't think his hea  
to trust him by himself. I should f  
Mr. Fourneaux, to know what s

dear child's you do not intend to keep, that if there is any of them that can be of use in this new addition to my family, I might take them for several reasons. I desire, when it is easy to you, that you will let me have some little trifle that my dear child used to wear in her pocket or any other way ; and I desire that Fanchon will look for some little cup she used to drink in. I had some of her hair not long since that I asked her for, but Fanchon may give me a better lock at the full length."

Fanchon was governess to the children. She had advanced Lord Sunderland £1200 on his bond at good interest, Lady Sunderland paying her £80 a year for the loan.

It was in May 1716, two months after the death of his favourite daughter, Lady Sunderland, that Marlborough was first attacked with serious illness, a palsy, which for a time deprived him of speech and recollection. He slowly recovered from this illness, but never to be quite the same again. As soon as he was strong enough for the journey he was removed to Bath, and ordered to take the waters. Although hardly well enough after the journey to bear the fatigue and excitement, he was received there with great honour and ceremony. It was during his stay at Bath that the following story was circulated. In order to save a sixpence in coach hire he preferred to walk to his lodgings, notwithstanding it was cold and wet, and he was ill and infirm. This has been attributed to avarice and his anxiety to save money. The habit of saving was acquired in his youth, when he was a poor officer, and it may here be asked, which are the best qualities to possess—penuriousness and generosity, or extravagance for one's own gratification and nearness in regard to others? It is not at all uncommon to find these seemingly opposite qualities combined. This was Lord

Bolingbroke's answer to a friend who made an allusion to this failing of the Duke of Marlborough's, "He was so great a man that I forgot he had that vice." Of Marlborough's generosity there can be little doubt, or the following anecdote would not be told of him. He had noticed the behaviour of a young officer in some engagement in Flanders, and sent him over to England with despatches, and a letter to the duchess desiring her to procure some superior commission in the army for him. The duchess read the letter and approved, but asked where was the £1000 required? The young man blushed, and said he was not master of such a sum. "Well then," said she, "you may return to the duke." This he did shortly afterwards, and related how he had been received. The duke laughingly said he thought it would be so, but he should however do better another time, and, presenting him with £1000, sent him back to England. This last expedition proved successful. The story has been told against the duchess, but all promotions were purchased at this time and for many years after. The money would not go into the pocket of the duchess, but into that of the man whose place he was to fill. The only thing that could be said against her on this score was, that she was not prepared to give £1000 to one who certainly had served under her husband, and was recommended by him, but was a stranger to herself.

The duchess accompanied the duke to Bath or joined him soon after, as while there, in August of that year, she received word that Sir John Vanbrugh had ordered some walling to be built round Woodstock for planting climbing fruit-trees, which he intended paying for. The duchess says she did not take much notice, only wrote that she was sure the duke would never allow Sir John Vanbrugh to pay for anything in

his park. On their return to Blenheim, while the architect was in London, they went to see the works. The duchess writes, "If one may judge of the expense of this place by the manner of doing things at Blenheim, there is a foundation laid for a good round sum. There is a wall to be carried round a great piece of ground, and a good length of it done, with a walk ten feet broad that is to go on the outside of this wall on the garden side, which must have another wall to enclose it. . . ." Very naturally Sarah was annoyed at all this outlay, especially after the decision arrived at some time before, that no more money should be spent on the ruins. It would appear there was originally a mistake in choosing the site for the building of Blenheim if the historical ruins were to be preserved; a dwelling-house so near and within sight of the palace would be a distinct drawback. The duchess had much good reason on her side. It is to be regretted that the remains of the interesting old palace were not kept, but probably early in the eighteenth century it had been too freshly demolished to be altogether beautiful; time had not softened the fallen stones with moss and clinging ivy. That was an age, also, when the old did not appeal to the same extent as in the rush and stress of the present day. The duchess's quarrel with Sir John must have dated from this discovery, as only a short time before they were corresponding on friendly terms upon the subject of the Duke of Newcastle, whom he had introduced, and who afterwards married the duchess's granddaughter, Lady Harriet Godolphin.

It was about this time, between 1717 and 1718, that for the amusement of the grandchildren, and very possibly also for the duke's entertainment, a play was got up at Blenheim. It was entitled "All for Love;



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or, *The World well Lost.*" The duchess erased some of the love-making, and no caresses were allowed.<sup>1</sup>

### PROGRAMME

<i>Marc Anthony</i> . . . . .	Captain Fish, page of the duchess.
<i>Ventidinus</i> . . . . .	Old Mr. Jennings.
<i>Seraphon, the High Priest</i> . . . . .	Miss Cairns. <sup>2</sup>
<i>Alexis</i> . . . . .	Mrs. La Vie.
<i>Cleopatra</i> . . . . .	Lady Charlotte Macarthy.
<i>Octavia</i> . . . . .	Lady Anne Spencer.
<i>Children of Marc Anthony</i> . . . . .	Lady Anne Egerton and Lady Diana Spencer.

*Scene.*—The bow window. Large screens were arranged for changing scenes.

Shortly after, the duke was laid up at his house suffering from an abscess in one of his shoulders. The wound had to be dressed twice a day. He was attended by Doctor Meade. Sarah did not like Dr. Meade. It was probably on this occasion that the incident occurred in which Sarah, in a rage, threatened to pull off his wig, chasing him half-way downstairs for the purpose. He escaped this indignity by beating a hasty retreat. This tale has often been told as a sample of the wild transports of rage she at times gave way to. That she had some Southern strain of blood can hardly be doubted; this and a very determined character, combined with an uncontrolled childhood and youth, may account for much. On the other hand, she had many qualities, both of mind and heart, to make up to herself and friends for her very trying temper. On one occasion when the duke was ill, Sarah pressed him to take some

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Thompson's "Life of the Duchess of Marlborough."

<sup>2</sup> "Miss Cairns was a daughter of Sir Alexander Cairns. She was educated with the Duchess of Marlborough's grandchildren, and afterwards became the second wife of Baron Blaney. Mrs. La Vie was a relation of Lady Cairns, and the daughter of a French refugee. She became the children's governess."

Lord Sunderland, having become unpopular in consequence of his implication in the South Sea scheme, resigned his office of First Commissioner of the Treasury, and was succeeded by Sir Robert Walpole, who became also Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it was greatly owing to him that the public credit was restored. Two years later, in 1722, Walpole was made Knight of the Bath and then of the Garter. He continued Prime Minister till the end of George I.'s reign, and for fifteen years later.

An inquiry was held into the fraudulent execution of the South Sea Act, under which the treasurer and others, including Sir John Blount, the promoter, quitted the kingdom. An Act was passed to allow the estates of the sub-governor, deputy-governor, and directors to be sold for the benefit of the sufferers, allowances being deducted for the support of the directors according to their rank in life.

When the ferment of the South Sea Bubble had subsided, the duchess had another excitement in the case against Sir John Vanbrugh; the first of several. As we have seen in a former chapter, he could not get the money for building Blenheim from the Crown, and therefore threw the debt upon the Duke of Marlborough. Disraeli, in his "Curiosities of Literature," says that in 1712 the duke took the building on himself for the purpose of accommodating the workmen. "But, although the duke had undertaken to pay the workmen, this could make no alteration of the claims on the Treasury. Blenheim was to be built for Marlborough, not by him; it was a monument raised by the nation to their hero, not a palace to be built by their mutual contribution."

In 1715 the workmen seem to have struck work. The reason for this does not appear, unless Marl-

borough felt that his own million was dwindling, while the Treasury remained unbending. Sir John Vanbrugh therefore produced the order Lord Godolphin had been persuaded to part with, "adding a Memorandum that the duke was to be considered as paymaster, the debts incurred devolving on the Crown. Vanbrugh not obtaining his claims from the Treasury, and the workmen becoming more clamorous, the architect suddenly turned on the duke and charged him with the whole debt. This instrument was utterly disclaimed by the duke, Marlborough declaring it existed without his knowledge." During Queen Anne's reign money was found from time to time. On one occasion the duchess stopped the work, afraid the duke would commit himself by giving orders to the workmen. "No specific sum had been voted in Parliament for so great an undertaking, consequently it was the occasion of causing trouble and litigation to all the parties concerned, threatening the architect with ruin, and, as we shall see, was finished at the sole charge and under the superintendence of the duchess herself."

The case came before the House of Lords in March 1721. We read in the Carlisle MSS.: "Lady E. Lechmere dined with the Duchess of Marlborough at her house, and then accompanied her to hear the cause." Sarah sent a message to Lord Carlisle to beg he would come to town, and afterwards wrote a long letter to explain her reasons. Vanbrugh's evidence was full of contradictions. "He himself looked upon the Crown as engaged to the Duke of Marlborough for the expense, but then he believed the workmen always looked upon the duke as their paymaster." The architect in his depositions took as much care to have the "guilt of perjury without the punishment of it as any man could do."

Disraeli further says, "Vanbrugh, it must be confessed, exerted not less of his dramatic than his architectural genius in the building of Blenheim!"

The final clause of the document reads as follows: "If the charge run into by order of the Crown must be upon the duke, yet the infamy of it must go upon another, who was perhaps the only architect in the world capable of building such a house, and the only friend in the world capable of continuing to lay the debt upon one to whom he was so highly obliged."

Lady E. Lechmere, writing from Windsor Lodge, says, "The duchess seems very easy of the losing her case, and has not a worse opinion of it than she had before." No wonder the duchess left town, easy in her mind. The final clause thoroughly justifies her assertions.

If Sir John had not annoyed the duchess with his mismanagement and extravagance, but had taken her in a different way when he found he could obtain no money for his workmen, representing to her the hardship upon the workpeople, she would have been the first to have helped them; but it was not a question of pity or compassion, but one of justice, hence all the anger and uncharitableness.

Lady E. Lechmere, writing to her father (Lord Carlisle) on 9th May 1721, says:—

"I was yesterday at the House of Lords with the Duchess of Marlborough. The cause is put off for a fortnight. She tells me she sent you down one of her written Cases, and the opinion of the judges in the Court of Exchequer. Sir John Vanbrugh was here this morning, and says he has sent for a printed paper (which I fancy you would not approve). He is now frightened about it, for he has made himself liable to severe punish-



ment, by being guilty of a breach of the House of Lords in printing a libel upon a peer while a Cause is depending before them in judgment, in which Sir John himself is a witness. How he'll come off, I can't tell; but he has given to the Duke of Marlborough the advantage of having a full blow at him if he pleases."

Vanbrugh's libel on the duke was the cause, no doubt, of the duchess's bitterness towards him. She resented far more anything that brought discredit on her husband than on herself. Subsequently she forbade Sir John Vanbrugh ever to enter the park at Blenheim. A few years later Vanbrugh, accompanied by his wife, went to Blenheim with a party from Castle Howard, another house he had designed. He writes:—

"We stayed two nights in Woodstock; but there was an order to the servants, under her Grace's own hand, not to let me enter Blenheim! and lest that should not mortify me enough, she having somehow learned that my wife was of the company, sent an express the night before we came there with orders that if she came with the Castle Howard ladies the servants should not suffer her to see either house, gardens, or even to enter the park. So she was forced to sit all day long and keep me company at the inn!!"<sup>1</sup>

The duchess had thus turned the tables very successfully. From a letter of Sarah's, written in 1724, we gather that £1500 a year was swallowed up by four officers at Blenheim for controlling the works and paying the workmen, while these same duties were satisfactorily discharged by one man for £100 a year in the case of the building of St. Paul's, the expense of which exceeded that of the building of Blenheim; but in the

<sup>1</sup> "Curiosities of Literature," by I. Disraeli. Vol. iii.



one case the business was in the hands of Sir John Vanbrugh, and in the other in that of Sir Christopher Wren.

No doubt a great deal of money had been wasted over the building of the Palace, for Sir John confessed to the Earl of Manchester that he had no one he could trust to superintend the works satisfactorily.

Some years before, the Duchess had written to one Joynes, the Clerk of Works at Blenheim, to put matters on a business footing. She says :—

“ST. ALBANS, 28th October 1710.

“I have sent the amount of what is owing to people about Woodstock this day, which is what my Lord Godolphin desired of Mr. Travers long since, but could not obtain, and I must needs be so plaine as to say I observe severall Things that I am much disappointed in, and I speak to nobody that does not think it very strange that it should require three or four months to give an account of what is due at Blenheim, when there was two persons intrusted that ought to have taken accounts perpetually, as fast as things were done; but that which is yet more wonderful is, that you have not given me an Exact amount of the money Mr. Travers borrowed, but say you paid severall men whose names you put downe, about Ten Pounds each man; surely that sume was not so great but you might easily have made it intelligible by saying in the common way what it was and to whom, and upon what account it was disposed off, but after a great deal said and a long time taken to answer, you make such a one upon that head, as makes me just as wise as I was before, and I believe you can't think it is to be understood.

“It was at my request, that my Lord Godolphin when he was Treasurer ordered you and Mr. Boulter

(in whose place Mr. Robart came) to be a check upon all the bills to signe them, and to take accounts of all things, and to make contracts. If this had been performed I can't see why there should be such a difficulty to know what is oweing. I am sure my Lord Treasurer always understood it was done in this manner, but that there may be no further mistake, I desire to know by the next post how all that matter is ordered, plainly, who it is that signs the Tradesmen's bills, and whether Mr. Robart and you don't know of all that is ordered upon the account of Blenheim. I always thought you did, and so did everybody that was concerned in that work, and that one might know at Blenheim at any time the whole sum that had been paid upon that account.

"I desire you would explain one thing more about the Brick and Lyme for which there is a great sume due, because in most buildings people pay soe much a Rod for the whole. I hope it will be no long thing to write a paper, only of what your method is, and what your agreements are. That I suppose will be noe more trouble than the copying a sheet or two of paper.—Your  
 Servant,<sup>1</sup> S. MARLBOROUGH."

Lord Sunderland did not long survive his third marriage. He died in 1722. At his death he owed the duke £10,000, but left him his library, which was only rivalled by that of Lord Oxford's in rarity and extent.

In a letter from W. Bromley to Colonel James Graham, already mentioned as a friend of the duchess, we read: "I am surprised at the treatment of him (Earl of Sunderland) by those in power. It is said the Duchess of Marlborough sealed up his escritoire; that some of the ministers came soon after, broke it open, and carried

<sup>1</sup> MSS., British Museum.

away all his papers. Had he been charged with the most heinous capital crimes, they could not have done worse."

The duchess was so indignant at this treatment of her son-in-law that she threatened to bring an action against the Treasury officers.

The Duke of Marlborough's health was so indifferent that he got into a restless state, and could not remain very long in any one place. Sometimes they were at Holywell, sometimes at Marlborough House, but more often at Windsor Lodge; the peace and quietness of this place suiting him better than elsewhere. A few months before he died he desired to alter his will. He had bequeathed to his wife an income of £10,000 a year, free from all taxes and charges, but shortly before his death he added another £5000 a year, putting in his will these touching words:—

"Whereas my personal estate is since greatly increased, and my said wife has been very tender and careful of me, and had great trouble with me during my illness; and I intending, for the consideration aforesaid and out of the tender affection, great respect, and gratitude which I have and do bear to her, and for her better increase of her title and honour, to increase her said annuity £5000 a year."

He also left her his plate, jewels, and the disposal of the estate at Sandridge which he had purchased. He wished Blenheim, after the duchess's death, to go with the title.

The duchess, knowing the importance of avoiding disputes in the future, on account of the duke's health, drew up the following statement:—

"I think it proper, in this place, to give some account of the Duke of Marlborough's distemper, and how he was when he signed his will. The Duke of Marlborough

was taken very ill at St. Albans in May 1716 with the palsy, but he recovered it so much as to go to Bath. Though he had often returns of this illness, he went many journeys, and was in all appearance well, excepting that he could not pronounce all words, which is common in that distemper, but his understanding was as good as ever. He did not speak much to strangers because, when he was stopped by not being able to pronounce some words, it made him uneasy. But to his friends that he was used to he could talk freely, and since his death Mr. Hanbury, the Dowager Lady Burlington, and many others of my friends, have remarked to me with pleasure the things that they had heard him say, and the just observations he had made upon what others had said to him, and he gave many instances of remembering several things in conversation that others had forgot."

Sir Edward Northey and Sir Robert Raymond, the family solicitors, were instructed about the will, and after some months' delay it was arranged that the duke should sign it at Marlborough House in the presence of Lord Finch, General Lumley, and Dr. Samuel Clarke, the rector of St. James's. These gentlemen were invited to dine at Marlborough House, and the duchess tells us what followed.

"As soon as dinner was over," writes the duchess, "he asked if Mr. Green had come (Sir Edward Northey's clerk), and as soon as he came into the room he asked him how his mother did. Upon Mr. Green's being come to put the seals to the will, the Duke of Marlborough rose from the table and fetched it himself out of his closet; and as he held it in his hand, he declared to the witnesses that it was his last will, that he considered it vastly well, and was entirely satisfied with it; and then he signed every sheet of paper, and delivered

it in all the forms. After this the witnesses all sat at the table and talked for some time. Lord Finch and Dr. Clarke went away first, about business; and when General Lumley rose up to go, who staid a while longer than the others, the Duke of Marlborough rose up too, and went to him and embraced him, taking him by the hand and thanking him for the favour he had done him."<sup>1</sup>

The duke left London in the spring of 1722 for Windsor Lodge, and here he passed away on June 16, 1722, after four days' illness. Messengers were hastily sent to London for physicians, but when they arrived he was past human aid. When asked by the duchess, who realised his end was near, whether he had heard the prayers that had been read to him, the duke answered feebly, "Yes, and I joined in them." And these were the last words he uttered.

The duchess, although not unprepared for the blow, was stunned with grief. She refused to leave the room, and sat by her dear lord's remains until they were placed in the coffin. Who can tell the thoughts that must have arisen in Sarah's mind as she sat there near her dearest lord, whose faithful heart had ceased to beat? Did she think of the many times she had sorely tried him with her hasty temper and bitter tongue? did the recollection of her childishness in cutting off her golden tresses to annoy him recur to her, and how patiently he had borne her tantrums, and how passionately he had loved her? It was after his death that she found her own locks placed in a cabinet where he kept his most valued treasures. Did her tears not flow afresh at this discovery? for fifteen years later, on mentioning this incident to Lady Mary W. Montague, she could not refrain from tears. There were several soft places

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Thompson's "Life of the Duchess of Marlborough."



in Sarah's heart which her worldly life had not and never could harden, and the principal of these was her deep love for her husband.

The body was embalmed, and at night was escorted by a detachment of Horse Guards to London. It was deposited beneath a canopy in one of the large rooms on the ground floor of Marlborough House, where it lay in state. The servants took it in turns to watch both night and day, four hours at a stretch. Crowds of people visited the mourning chamber.

On August 6 the funeral procession left Marlborough House and proceeded down the Mall through Constitution Hill to Hyde Park Corner, and then by Piccadilly to Pall Mall and Charing Cross to Westminster Abbey; the cavalcade, which was of a most imposing character, being directed by the Garter King of Arms. A helmet and complete suit of armour rested on the coffin, which was covered by a magnificent embroidered pall. It was placed on an open funeral-car. The late duke's imperial cap as a prince of the Holy Roman Empire, and his ducal coronet also rested on the coffin. On the sides of the funeral-car shields were displayed, representing emblems of the battles he had won and the towns he had captured. The number was so great that people felt ashamed at the treatment such a hero had received from the nation, who ought to have showed him the greatest honour.

Representatives of all branches of the army marched in the procession, including a band of seventy-three Chelsea pensioners. These veterans shed tears, while they uncovered their heads before the remains of their beloved commander.<sup>1</sup> The troops were under the command of Lord Cadogan.

Immediately following the bier, in the widowed

<sup>1</sup> Alison's "Life of the Duke of Marlborough."

duchess's coach, was the Duke of Montague, acting as chief mourner. He was followed by the Earls of Godolphin and Sunderland in Henrietta Duchess of Marlborough's chariot. Thirteen other coaches followed, belonging to various peers, and a second procession of carriages was headed by those of his Majesty the King and the Prince of Wales.

An anthem<sup>1</sup> by Signor Buononcini, specially written for the occasion, was sung during the ceremony. The duke's remains were removed from King Henry VII.'s chapel to Blenheim on the death of the duchess twenty-two years later, when a fine marble monument by Rysbach was erected over the tomb in the chapel.

George I. offered to defray the expenses of the State funeral, but the duchess would not hear of this, and paid the whole of the cost, which amounted to upwards of £1000.

The duke had appointed as executors to his will the duchess, the Earl of Godolphin, and the Duke of Bridgewater. He desired his servants should each receive two years' wages.

The duchess remained at Windsor until all was over. She then came to town and ordered an imposing hatchment with the duke's coat-of-arms—a large black spread-eagle surmounted by a crown, and the family motto, "Faithful but unfortunate"—to be hung on the south side of Marlborough House.

It was the custom to leave the hatchment for one year, and when done with to hang it up in the church over the family pew. These hatchments are seldom now to be seen, and have mostly been swept away with other old customs of the past.

On June 21, 1722, Lady Cowper wrote to Mrs. Clayton: "I cannot forbear this opportunity of con-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix VIII.

soling with you upon the loss of your friend, the Duke of Marlborough, whose memory must ever be held in the highest esteem by every Englishman that values his country, for whom the duke did so great things, that posterity will hardly credit what he has done, or that his humanity could equal his success."

The many calumnies against Marlborough's good name were set going by the jealousy of his so-called friends and the spite of his enemies. It is only of late years that true justice has been done to his memory. Both Macaulay and Thackeray had strong prejudices against him, attributing double motives to his every action, nor has this fallacy yet totally disappeared.

The duchess's health was affected by her grief. Lord Coningsby, writing a short time after, mentions how concerned he was to see her looking so far from well, and appearing to take little care of herself. This is what he says:—

"Though I desire above all things in this world to see you for a moment, yet so much do I prize Lady Marlborough's safety above my own satisfaction, that I would not have you in this distracted place (London) at this dismal juncture, for any consideration under heaven. I intend by God's permission to leave it myself soon, but whither to go, or how to dispose of a life entirely devoted to you, I know not till I receive your orders and commands.

"But I live in hopes that the great and glorious Creator of the world, who does and must direct all things, will direct you to make me the happiest man upon the face of the earth, and enable me to make my dearest, dearest Lady Marlborough, as she is the wisest and the best, the happiest of all women.

"I am, your Grace knows I am, with the truest, the

sincerest, and the most faithful heart,—Your Grace's most dutiful and most obedient humble servant,

“CONINGSBY.”

He would have been delighted to have been permitted to comfort her himself, and actually proposed to her. His letters are full of devotion, but are very involved and badly expressed; he was a well-meaning, kind-hearted man. Harley, however, had a poor opinion of his capacity. The duchess also received, within a short time of her husband's death, a proposal from the Duke of Somerset, known as the “proud Duke.” She, however, declined the honour, saying that if he were the Emperor of the World she would “not permit him to succeed to that heart which had been devoted to John, Duke of Marlborough.” She and the Duke of Somerset remained very good friends, and Sarah suggested his marriage to Lady Charlotte Finch. There are many stories told of his absurd pride, but these are too well known to need repetition.

We find by the duchess's correspondence that shortly after the duke's death her relations with her two surviving daughters—Henrietta, Lady Godolphin, now Duchess of Marlborough, and the Duchess of Montague—had become much strained.

The duchess wrote the following letter to Mrs. Godolphin, wife of the Provost of Eton, who was a brother of the late Sidney, Earl of Godolphin, and in it she tells some of her grievances:—

*To MRS. GODOLPHIN.*

“WINDSOR LODGE, 12th November 1722.

“I am much obliged to you, dear Mrs. Godolphin, for all your kind enquiries after me. I have not been

anywhere to see anybody that I could well avoid, but I can no longer hold from writing to you upon a very melancholy subject, because I am sure you cannot but have heard all the vile things that have been reported of me, which has forced me to collect a great many disagreeable things in order to vindicate myself to those that I value most ; and as I have had reason always to think you my friend, I desire the favour of you to read this long paper. You will see by it how long I have endeavoured to hide my misfortunes from the world ; but, now that there is hardly a possibility of a reconciliation between me and my children, from the very injurious aspersions which they have publicly thrown upon me, I neither can, nor, I think, ought to suffer any longer under it ; and if I had not taken so much pains to conceal their faults, at the same time that they and their wretched friends were making all manner of false reports of me, I believe it had not been possible for them to have prevailed so much as they have done. I have known people of the most calm temper very much warmed upon account of their reputation, and having borne what I have done for so many years rather than hurt my children, I hope nobody will blame me now for what I do, which I am forced to by them to prevent my being pointed at wherever I go.

“The paper that this sad story is written upon is so bad that the sheets are torn asunder, but as they are paged, I hope you will not find it very troublesome to read ; and I am persuaded that you have so much goodness as to pardon this trouble when you have got through this account, and agree in the old saying, that one story is good till another is told.”

In a letter to Mr. Jennens about the same date as the preceding, Sarah relates something of the dispute



she had with her daughter Henrietta, who had a good deal of her mother's haughty temper and impetuosity, and was so like her in character that the duke her father wondered why they did not get on together; but extremes meet, while parallel lines can never amalgamate.

It appears Lady Godolphin, as she was at the time, had in charity taken an orphan boy of good birth, named Cudworth, and had him clothed and educated, after which she got him some employment under Government, and her steward often employed him to fetch money from the bank. About two years before the duchess wrote, the steward sent him for £100, but fell ill and did not ask for the money for six weeks. In the meantime the youth, whose salary was much in arrears, took some of the money to meet his most pressing debts, hoping to refund it, but was called upon to pay up before he had done so, and out of fear and shame he ran away. Not being able to get a living he returned, and begged the steward to give him time to make it good; but instead he was imprisoned, it was said, by Henrietta's order. An old professor, learning of his misfortunes and being fond of the lad, gave him some money for his immediate wants, but could not afford to pay the debt. So Cudworth applied to Duchess Sarah. The latter considered, with fees and clothing, it was too large a sum to pay for a stranger she had never seen, so suggested that Lady Godolphin should be applied to. Some three months after the youth was still languishing in prison, and, hearing of his pitiful condition, the duchess paid his debts and clothed him, his former teacher promising to find him employment. This, the duchess said, was all she knew of the matter, and says: "I never thought of taking this man, and if I had, my daughter has shown me that ceremony is needless between her and me, since she has taken my

servants that were put away for crimes they deserved to be hanged for. . . . I think the world is much inclined to find fault with me since this is imputed to me as a wrong thing. All I can say is that Cudworth is not the first person I have taken out of prison."

It is possible the Duchess of Marlborough offended her daughter Mary by being too outspoken in regard to her son-in-law, the Duke of Montague, of whom she wrote: "All his talents lie in things natural in boys of fifteen years old, and he is about two-and-fifty—to get people into his garden and wet them with squirts, and to invite people to his country house and put things into their beds to make them itch, and twenty such pretty fancies like these." A note to the above by Lord Hailes says, "He had other pretty fancies; he did good without ostentation; his vast benevolence of soul is not recorded by Pope, but it will be remembered while there is any tradition of human kindness or charity in England."

The Duke of Montague had a hospital for old horses and cows. None of his servants dared kill a broken-winded horse, as he expected them to be brought there. He was very fond of an ugly old lapdog, and preferred those that were most ugly, because no one else would be kind to them. The Duke of Montague once invited a famous *bon vivant* named Dartneuf to dine with him. The guest arrived punctually at the hour named, six o'clock. In order to tease Dartneuf, his Grace assured him that he had mistaken the hour; the cloth was removed, and all he could offer him was a beefsteak. Dartneuf, much mortified, sat down to make the best of what was not even a tender morsel.

When he appeared resigned to his fate, the duke, assuring him it was a good thing to accommodate oneself to circumstances, especially as regards eating—ducted his astonished guest, with other friends

been awaiting developments in an adjoining apartment, to a sumptuous feast prepared in another room.

There is a portrait in existence of John, Duke of Montague. In anticipation of receiving the Order of the Garter, he had the ribbon painted over his coat; the honour not forthcoming, the ribbon had to be obliterated, but the faint outline can still be distinguished. His wife, Mary, was the youngest of the Duchess of Marlborough's daughters. She never appears to have got on with her mother. She was very beautiful, and was probably very worldly and spoilt.

The correspondence with Dr. Hare throws some light on their quarrel. It appears that the Duchess of Montague paid insufficient attention to Duchess Sarah, not "waiting" on her as often as she might expect, not showing her the affection and duty that she considered herself entitled to; consequently Sarah's temper rose, she spoke hastily and things became worse, on one side "resentment and expostulations," and on the other an impatience of "reproof." Dr. Hare says, "Your Grace has certainly been an exceedingly good, kind, and tender mother, and this gave your Grace a right to expect all possible returns of affection and duty; and when your Grace has not found these you have not, I am afraid, allowed enough to the restraint children, even when they grow up, are under in the presence of their parents, which restraint is greater in proportion to the gaiety of those that feel themselves under it," &c. &c. He goes on to say he thinks them very faulty, or they would not have been capable of such behaviour to so good and kind a mother, and, whatever the duchess may have said, he thinks their conduct inexcusable, and if he were writing to them he should not scruple to tell them so.

Dr. Hare had been Lord Blandford's tutor, and in consequence became a lifelong friend of both duke

and duchess. The doctor, although expressing himself tactfully, does not hesitate to warn the duchess of her faults, therefore when he speaks in her favour he ought to be believed.

The Duchess of Montague was fond of society, going to concerts and assemblies, to which Lady Mary Wortley Montague alludes in her letters. The duchess's daughter Isabella married the son of her grandmother's friend, the first Duke of Manchester. She was most amiable, and possessed qualities of heart and mind that endeared her to Sarah, who was greatly concerned when she fell ill. Sarah drove over from Windsor Lodge to Claremont to inquire after her granddaughter, who it appears was suffering from a bad throat, probably diphtheria.

Writing to Mrs. Godolphin, she says, "I can't but think that there is reason to hope she will do well, if Dr. Meade does not kill her, for I know by woeful experience that he is the most obstinate and ignorant doctor that we have had a great while, though he is much followed at present. Dr. Sloane is there, and Sir G. Garth was expected. One doctor, I think, is better than a great many, if you can rely upon him; and, as the practice is amongst them, you have really but the advice of one when you call in twenty, for they all submit to that doctor that is most cryed up, either for a quiet life, or fear of not being sent for to his patients."

Sarah may not have done justice to Dr. Meade's ability, but that she had no confidence in medical men of her day is not surprising when one reads of the extraordinary remedies advocated by the profession at that time. A Lord Westmorland bitterly complained how his wife lost a fine baby in consequence of injuries the unfortunate mother received by the advice of a London physician, "who ordered her to be driven as fast as

possible over the roughest roads for an hour, in order to bring on her confinement." He was sure an injury had been done, not only to the present child but also to future expectations, "and so," he concludes, "it hath proved."

Another gentleman wrote in 1714 an account of a Mr. Bridges, of Windsor, who bruised his toe. With a little care he would have quickly recovered, but the surgeon "applied contrary salves on purpose to make it appear a difficult cure, and let it go so far he could not retrieve it, and though it was not his desire he destroyed the gentleman," who lost his life by that means.

The present generation has many advantages over its forefathers, but none should be more appreciated than the strides the medical profession have made within the last century.



## CHAPTER XII

### WHEN GEORGE I. WAS KING

(1723-1727)

*"Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale  
Her infinite variety."*

WE now come to that period of her life when the Duchess of Marlborough occupied her active mind in buying large estates. She was very wealthy, and the best way to invest money then, and for many years after, was to buy land. Those were the days when towns had not denuded the country of its sons of the soil, when land repaid its value, and was considered a good investment, as it could not run away.

In April, 1723, the Duchess of Marlborough bought the old manor of Wimbledon, sold by Act of Parliament, which had been in possession of one of the South Sea directors, Sir Theodore Jansen. She paid £19,650 for the copyhold on a lease of five hundred years; with this went also property at East Sheen, Putney, Mortlake, and Roehampton. The manor of this name was let for £250 a year. Some of the rents paid were ridiculously small to modern ideas, five shillings and two shillings a year, and even as low as one shilling a year, for a cottage!

The beautiful old manor-house at Wimbledon, built in Queen Elizabeth's reign by Sir Thomas Cecil, had been pulled down and another erected in its place by Sir Theodore Jansen, and this was hardly completed when the great South Sea Bubble burst.

Sarah had the house levelled and another built from

designs by her friend Lord Burlington, but, disliking the aspect, this also had to come down, and yet one more was built a little further to the south. Miss Hannah More visited this mansion when in the occupation of the Bishop of St. Asaph, to whom it had been lent by Lord Spencer thirty-six years after Sarah's death.

She found in the library there a number of books given by their famous authors to the duchess, who had carefully written the names of the donors in the blank leaves, for, says Miss Hannah More, "I believe she had the pride of being thought learned as well as rich and beautiful."

Among these, no doubt, were found Addison's *Spectator* in pamphlet form, Gay's "Beggar's Opera," Pope's "Essay on Man," Burnet's "History of His Own Times," and many more. Probably they were burnt when the mansion was destroyed by fire in 1785.

It was after Sarah had retired from court that books became her delight. In her earlier days she is reported to have said, "Books! Prithee, don't talk to me about books; the only books I know are men and cards!" However, she was not very singular in this; there were plenty of others at the court who had no pretensions to a love of literature, and preferred cards. Sarah added to this accomplishment the study of character and her own times, which enabled her to exercise much political influence, and which earned her the name of a "Wolsey in Petticoats."

The Duchess of Marlborough's political opinions are freely expressed in the following letter to the Duke of Manchester, who had married her granddaughter:—

"24<sup>th</sup> August 1733.

"I am ashamed to have been so long without answering your Grace's letter of the 9th August, which did

proceed from my unwillingness to say anything to you which might look like not complying with your desire, which I can solemnly protest will always be a great pleasure to me, in everything in the world that relates entirely to yourself, unless it be in what may turn to the prejudice of the public, and as to that principle I can never alter.

"To preserve the liberties of England has cost a great deal of blood and treasure, and after the share the Duke of Marlborough had in venturing his life so often to secure them, it is not possible for me to assist in the choosing any members of Parliament but such as are most likely to act for the true interest of the nation. I think we have nothing left to keep us from slavery but a wise and honest House of Commons, and after having sent away King James to secure our valuable constitution, I would sooner die than give it up to any minister. . . . And I am sure, when you reflect, you must be so reasonable as to excuse me for what I say, for if your Grace was my own son, and would for any reason make an interest contrary to the nation's, if I had a thousand votes to dispose of, I would give them all against you, or against any man living who has voted not to look into public accounts. . . . Therefore my resolution is, when I know what members offer themselves at any place where my estate gives me an interest, I will certainly give it to those men who have the best estate, the best character, and who have not in former Parliaments given their votes to keep themselves in their employments.

"My nature is, if I must speak, always to be sincere, and with the same sincerity I do assure you that I shall always be glad to oblige you upon any other point."

The duchess wrote in October 1730 (correspondent

unknown) about an election. She apologises for having written twice on the same subject, and then says: "I think your Grace is extremely in the right to make the thing quite clear, and to vote for him that you have promised, tho' he were not likely to carry it. I am sure I should do so in the same case myself, never loving to serve a friend by halves."

The year after the duchess purchased Wimbledon she bought an estate in Surrey, the manor of Chilworth, and at the latter end of 1725 the manor of Payham in Sussex, from Sir Leith Bishopp, for which she paid £6540. In October of the next year the duchess paid £13,670, or about £3 the acre, for another fine property, the manor of Shortlands, at Goshurst, which came into the market and was sold by Act of Parliament.

Hardly a year passed till her death that she did not buy one, if not two, estates in one of twelve counties. The principal of these was a property in Northamptonshire for £17,734; another from the Throckmorton family for £38,000; one in Staffordshire, belonging to Lord Falconberg, which included several manors; this cost her £29,000.<sup>1</sup>

Besides this, the duchess took up several mortgages on land and lent money to the Government. Is it to be wondered at that, with such an immense landed property, she found herself often having recourse to the law? All these were freeholds, with the exception of Wimbledon Manor, which was a copyhold. We must remember this exception, because Queen Caroline and the Duchess of Marlborough, a few years later, had a dispute over Wimbledon.

The following letter is one of many written by Lady Diana Spencer to James, Earl of Findlater and Seafield,

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix IX.

for her grandmother, and refers to one of the duchess's suits in Chancery :—

*"February 1723.*

"My Mamma Duchess having a headache makes use of me for a Secretary to give your Lordship a great many thanks for the honour of your letter which she has received to-day, and to tell you that she is extremely pleased that you like her manner of explaining the merits of the cause, which tho' it is not in the forms of a Chancery Bill are all facts proved and as true as anything in the Bible. Upon the encouragement your Lordship has given her, she will give you more papers before the hearing, and she does not doubt but you will assist her in everything that is just, and farther than that she knows herself incapable of desiring. And she depends upon your justice the more because she is a witness that the Duke of Marlborough and the late Earl of Godolphin esteemed and loved you, and she believes their friendships were always well grounded. She gives you many thanks for your promise of dining with her when you are at leisure. She won't fix a time for that honour because you will be always wellcome whenever it is easy for you to come, and she knows when 'tis without invitations you will not dislike a family dinner which will be always ready a half hour after three.—I am your Lordship's obedient and humble servant, D. SPENCER."

Mr. W. Murray, afterwards Lord Mansfield, at the age of thirty-three made a brilliant speech in defence of a client, and attracted the attention of the Duchess of Marlborough, who was so delighted with him that she sent the rising young barrister a thousand guineas as a retaining fee. To the duchess's astonishment, he would only accept five guineas as a general retainer.



One evening he returned to find the duchess's chariot and numerous attendants, including several footmen and linkbearers, waiting in King's Bench Walk. Sarah met him on his entry and exclaimed, "Young man, if you want to rise in the world you must not sup out." On another occasion she called without an appointment and waited till past midnight. Mr. Murray did not return from his supper-party until after the duchess had retired in a rage. "I could not make out, sir, who she was," said the clerk, "for she would not tell me her name; but she swore so dreadfully that I am sure she must be a lady of quality."<sup>1</sup>

In one of her suits, Sarah was so delighted with her counsel that, immediately after the trial, she presented him with a fine sword "as a perpetual retainer in her favour." The duchess must have been a mine of wealth to her solicitor.

Sarah had a charitable scheme in view when buying these estates; they were not only to enrich herself or her posterity, but also to benefit poor people of her own day, as we shall see.

There are many instances of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough's generosity. On 29th September 1732 there is a record of her having subscribed £1000 to settle poor families in the colony of Georgia, this sum being paid over to trustees. This was a scheme for colonising Swiss peasants.

A Mr. Budgell, a writer in the *Spectator* and a relation of Addison's, while employed as Comptroller and Accountant-General for Ireland, made an enemy of the Duke of Bolton, the then Lord-Lieutenant; he was obliged to quit his post, and found it impossible to get further employment under Government. He speculated

<sup>1</sup> "Old and New London," W. Thornbury.

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and lost the greater part of his fortune in the South Sea Bubble. The remnant, a sum of £5000, he spent in contesting an election, being anxious to obtain a seat in the House of Commons in order to ventilate his grievances. He was unsuccessful, so the duchess gave him a further sum of £1000 to make another effort to get into Parliament, but this project also failed.

In the end, Budgell's mind gave way under his misfortune, and he put an end to his life by throwing himself into the Thames, near Somerset Stairs, having previously filled his pockets with stones. He was the author of "The Boyle Memoirs," which were published in 1732.

A banker named Child was oppressed and nearly ruined by the Bank of England. A friend of his stated his case to the Duchess of Marlborough, who gave the following order into his hand :—

"To the Governor and Company of the Bank of England.

"Pay the Bearer the sum of £100,000.

"SARAH MARLBOROUGH."

It is needless to relate that the Bank of England dropped the prosecution, but it had the effect of making the fortune of Child's Bank.

Besides buying estates, the care of which must have entailed much business, the duchess was in 1725 occupied over the case against Mr. Guidot, the Duke of Marlborough's former man of business. The executors of his will were not satisfied with this gentleman's accounts, and the matter was referred to the Lord Chancellor. Mr. Guidot was a cousin of Mrs. Jennens, whose husband was the duchess's friend and correspondent. The latter felt the action very much,

and it is said the worry of it occasioned Robert Jennens' death. The following letters<sup>1</sup> on the subject passed between the friends :—

*To MR. JENNENS.*

*"LONDON, July 17, 1725.*

"I have been kept a while in town longer than I wished upon extraordinary business, and now have a great addition to it by the Executor suit with Mr. Guidot. . . . He has stood upon privelegd and till some days after rise last Sessions, when he would have sequestered if he had not put in his answer. I got it, and the Executors are driving it on as fast as possible in hopes to get a hearing by Michaelmas; and in order to do that we shall be examining the Proofs of our witnesses, which are a great many and very strong, and will demonstrate to ye Court yt he is foresworn in his whole answer, excepting one false Article which he owns to have been wrong and which amounts to but £60, which he acknowledges he received of ye Duke of Newcastle and did not bring into his accounts.

"You will remember ye conversation which I had with you concerning the Mortgage of the Interest of it, which you told me you certainly did pay to him; and it appears by several accounts and memos. to be so. But Mr. Guidot did not put it into the Duke of Marlborough's accounts when the Duke of Marlborough was going out of England, but if he had had ever so much time to look into accounts, it was hardly possible for him to remember all the Mortgages or Interests that Mr. Guidot had received, and I am told by the most able Counsel in England that tho' you can't unravel an Account signed many years ago,

<sup>1</sup> Published in 1875, from MSS. at Madresfield Court.

yet the Discharge of the Account signed can go no further than that of the sums that are in it:

"The Executors don't dispute what the Duke of Marlborough has given his Hand for, but there is a great deal besides yours, which Mr. Guidot has received and never brought into his Accounts, all which appear very plain. . . .

(Signed) "S. MARLBOROUGH."

MR. JENNENS' *Answer*.

"MADAM,—By Waller's to your Grace, I find my interrogation is to be in person. . . . If Mr. Waller is sure the hearing can be brought on by Michaelmas Term, which, knowing the Dilatoriness of Chancery, I doubt, will have my interros. ready and give me some few days' notice, I will certainly attend in London. . . ."

To MR. JENNENS.

"LONDON, July 24, 1725.

"I give you many thanks for the favour of yours of the 10th July. I did not receive it till a day later, but I wrote immediately to Mr. Waller concerning what you desired about the Interrogatories, and I enclose his Answer to it, which I suppose will inform you more perfectly than anything I can say, who have never studied that business till I was forced to it by the many frauds, but however I imagine that your Interrogatories will be to the following Purposes: whether you did not tell me in the presence of Charles Hodges, upon my showing you a state of the Debts upon Sir W. Gostwick's Estate, that you had paid off the £2500, with the Interest due upon it to Mr. Guidot in 1711. . . . I remember when I first spoke to you upon this matter you told me the whole story,

how Mr. Guidot had desired my Lord M. to take your Mortgage upon Sir W. Gostwick's Estate, which was part of your wife's Portion, and to continue a Mortgage of £2500 upon Mr. Daniel's estate till it was easy to you to pay it. . . .

(Signed) "S. MARLBOROUGH."

In another letter Mr. Jennens says :—

"ACTON, 12th August 1725.

" . . . I was in hopes that the more strictly you examined into my Cousin Guidot's conduct, the more innocent he would have appeared in your thoughts, for I always took him for a sincere honest man ; but since it proves the contrary, and as my Transactions with him on the Duke's account form the blackest Accusation, I beg that my Interrogs. may be as strict and full as possible, that what I have done may be shown as it is done. . . ."

In another letter the duchess writes to Mr. Jennens:—

"November 2, 1725.

" . . . All the witnesses that are of the greatest consequence are examined, and if you will please to let me know the earliest day that you will be in town I will take care that you shall not be detained longer than you like to stay, and I suppose your Evidence will not take a quarter of an hour with the Examiner. I have the satisfaction to see already that the Executor's cause will be very strong, and the Charges proved plainly upon Mr. Guidot, and whatever the event of some inconsiderable Particulars may be at law, yet I shall be able to demonstrate that I am in the right of everything in that affair, which I like better than Money. . . ."



In another letter she says :—

*"November 8, 1725.*

" . . . Mr. Waller sends me word that the Examiner has promised to examine you as soon as you come, and it may be done if you please to-night. . . ."

Mr. Robert Jennens of Acton died intestate early in the following year, when on his way to give evidence against his cousin. His wife survived him. His son William lived to a great age, was of a most eccentric character, and died sixty years later, also without a will ; a suit was the result, which dragged on for many years.<sup>1</sup>

The following letter to an unknown correspondent, possibly Lord Chesterfield, on the same subject is interesting. The reference to buying looking-glasses for Blenheim tells us that the furnishing of that house was not yet completed :—

*"MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, 16th November 1725.*

"MY LORD,—I have received your Lordship's letter of the 15th of this month so full of goodness to me, and I hope you won't think the worse of me if I cannot at this time express myself to my own mind and as I ought to do upon your subject, but I am harassed to death, being risen every day for a great while by candle-light, to take care that no Witness should be neglected to be sent for, in order to prove that never any man was so much trusted as Mr. Guidot was, or that abused a trust so much, but I shall certainly prove him to be the worst man that ever appeared in Westminster Hall, and besides the advantage that I am told the Duke of Marlborough's posterity must have from this suit, I shall vindicate the

<sup>1</sup> Jarndyce *v.* Jarndyce, in "Bleak House," is founded on this case. There had been two cousins named Robert Jennens, and the trouble arose from a mistaken identity.

Duke of Marlborough sufficiently from what Mr. Guidot so foolishly and insolently swore of so great a man that he was out of pocket for having served him, having never had any advantage for lending so many thousand pounds but a present of one chest of Florence wine. Upon your encouragement I have desired my Lady Portland to send the chocolate to your Broker's house at the Hague, and if there is too great a quantity to bring all at once, I know he will be so good as to let it stay there till there are other opportunities of bringing it over; and I have taken the liberty to order some looking-glasses to be sent from Paris and left at your brother's House, which are for Blenheim. This I did because there has been some Law made by which the Customs would cost for glasses from Paris as much as the Prime cost is, and I hope some time or other to get some great person to bring them over as their own furniture, and if I fail in that, the duty is much more moderate when they are exported from Holland. If this is encroaching upon the power you have given me, it is no more than you generally find in people now, to abuse it a little for their own advantage. I never differed with you in any thought excepting the conclusion of what you say upon marriage, that, 'if it be necessary, the sooner it is got over the better.' I think that where the affection is grounded upon good reason, it cannot be too soon; but if one marries from Custom and for Posterity only, I think I should delay that heavy yoke as long as I could. I am called to Lawyers, and I can't thank you half so much as I would; but I beg of you, in short, to believe that you never did nor can oblige any Person that has a greater sense of Gratitude to you, nor that is with more truth than I am, —Your Lordship's ever faithful and most obliged humble servant,

S. MARLBOROUGH."

A short time before, in August, Sarah wrote to Mr. Jennens:—

"I have a letter from a very good judge, who says he has been to Blenheim, and that the Lake Cascade slopes above the Bridge are all finished, and as beautiful as can be imagined, the banks being covered with a most delightful verdure; the canals are all finished the whole length of the Meadow under the wood, and there are a hundred men at work sloping the Hill near Rosamond's Well, and when all the Banks are done in the same manner, the whole design completed, it will certainly be a wonderful fine place, and I believe will be liked by everybody. And I am glad it will be, because it was the Duke of Marlborough's passion to have it done, but in 1716 it was so terrible an undertaking that I am sure I should never have ventured upon it if you had not pushed me on to do it."

The duchess managed so well that she completed Blenheim Palace with half the sum the duke had left for the purpose. The triumphal arch over the gate leading to Woodstock and the column in the park were erected to his memory at her own expense.

It has been calculated that the united sums spent on Blenheim by Government and by Marlborough and his widowed duchess amounted to £300,000.

In another letter to Mr. Jennens, the duchess mentions that she has got a new secretary in the person of the Duke of Bedford, who was at that time courting Lady Anne Egerton, daughter of the Duchess of Bridgewater, whom he married shortly afterwards, 1725. Sarah's words are: "He has come to town about his own business, and he has turned Dye out of her place as my Secretary, which you know is a common thing in this Age for Ministers to trip up one another's heels."

After this playful sally, Sarah goes on to say, "He is the best servant and Minister that ever I had, and, is so far from being lazy that he copys out all my papers that I have. He is certainly a perfect Miracle of his age. I think Providence designs to make me amends for some of my past Sufferings by the goodness and kindness of this young man, for I am told by several of my friends that he says he loves me of all things, and I am sure that I will preserve it by doing everything that I can to serve him." The above shows how quickly Sarah's heart responded to affection. The Duke of Bedford alluded to above died in 1732.

In 1726 the duchess had a dispute with Sir Robert Walpole. It appears that when Sarah was granted the site on which Marlborough House was built, she had been given permission to drive her coach in St. James's Park, a privilege she retained even after her withdrawal from Queen Anne's court. Sir Robert Walpole had advised the King to limit the numbers using the park, forgetting the Duchess of Marlborough, whether intentionally or not is uncertain; but the permission was withdrawn, and her coach stopped. One can well understand her indignation. She gives an account of her grievances against Sir Robert in a letter to Dr. Hare, dated 1726. She says:—

"I think it unreasonable for St. James's Park to be made like a street, but considering the situation of my house and how very modestly I had made use of the liberty that was given me during the late Queen's time, I thought for the services that I always endeavoured to do Sir Robert, when I had power, that he would not allow the Duke of Buckingham's widow a greater favour than the Duke of Marlborough's, since her house is as near Hyde Park and Westminster as mine. . . . Sir



Robert Walpole told me himself that the Duchess of Buckingham had wrote so impertinent a letter to the King that she was not to be allowed to go through the Park, yet after that she was allowed to go through every part of the Park as much as the Royal Family, and what I aimed at was only to go sometimes when my health required it to take the air. Mrs. Dunck has likewise been permitted the same favour, who lives at Whitehall. . . . A great while after, when I found the Duchess of Buckingham went through, being so ill that I could not bear the jolting of a coach upon the stones, I wrote to the Princess to obtain this favour for me. She wrote to me in half-an-hour with a great deal of goodness, and would not send me a refusal till she had tried several times. Sir Robert knew this, (and) might have prevented my troubling her Royal Highness at all. It was natural for any man that had any gentlemanlike qualities asking the King's leave before anything of this happened. He certainly should have done it without giving me any trouble but to thank him for his civility, for it was a small favour."

The duchess concludes her long letter to Dr. Hare by saying, "I am sorry to find you think that my resentments are so strong that I must be more calm before I can make right reflection. I think I can easily be convinced by reason, and I am sure I never was in any passion about these things, nor I believe never shall be about anything that any Court or Minister can do me. I know the world too well to have anything of that sort strike very deep, and I hope I shall always take care (as I have hitherto done) not to be the aggressor. I have followed your advice in putting another person in my place in order to judge better of the matter. I can positively affirm that had I been



in Sir R. Walpole's place, I should have done very few things that he has done ; and, as ill as he has used me, if he were put in my place, and he had been so treated, I should have prevented it had I been in power."

The King refused the princess's request. As we have seen, he had no particular love for his daughter-in-law, "Cette Diablesse Madame la Princesse," as he called her, nor had he any desire to conciliate the Duchess of Marlborough now that the duke, her husband, whom he had admired, was dead. Hence the refusal. Sir Robert would not again apply to his Majesty.

The Duchess of Buckingham, Sarah's *bête noire*, was a most extraordinary woman, both silly and conceited. Some doubt is thrown on her royal parentage, it being thought Colonel Graham, and not James, was her father. Her grandfather, Sir Charles Sedley, was among the first to promote the revolution of 1688 ; so keen was he that it was thought he had private reasons for his rancour. Sedley was one day asked why he appeared so inflamed against the King, to whom he owed so much. "I hate ingratitude," the famous wit replied, "and, therefore, as the King has made my daughter a countess, I will endeavour to make his daughter a Queen."

The Duchess of Marlborough had no other way of leaving Marlborough House but by the entrance into Pall Mall, which, to judge from the following letter, was not always in a savoury condition. There was hardly room enough for a coach and six horses to enter or leave.

DIANA SPENCER (*for the duchess*) to LORD TREASURER.

"MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, 7th July 1725.

"Some days ago Mr. Saunders measured the buildings in the Pall Mall to the passage that turns into Marlborough House, and, upon examining the leases of those houses from the turn, he told the Duchess of Marlborough

they had encroached eight feet into the breadth of the way to her house, and since this report they have built out several sheds and more cellars, which do not only make it narrower, but from their setting out benches, drays coming to carry things into the cellars, it is sometimes difficult for chairs to pass it; besides this they let stalls for herbs and stinking things that is a nuisance in the passage to her house, &c. Duchess desires no more than to have the passage remain as it was without encroachments, and suggests to the Lord of the Treasury to signify to the owners that the leases are forfeited by their encroachment of eight feet, but that they will not pull their houses down if they will themselves pull down these *things which they have encroached since this reign.*" The paper is endorsed "22nd July 1725. Write to surveyor's, acquaint him duchess's complaint. Matter inquired into. Rectified."<sup>1</sup>

In referring to her dispute with Sir Robert Walpole, Dr. Hare answers the duchess that he is sorry to see where there is so much to charm there is also so much to blame. He assures her he has an affectionate regard and esteem for her, and really admires her for her fine understanding and good sense, and for the just and noble sentiments she expresses on all occasions in the best language and the most agreeable manner; but that the more he admires the more concerned he feels to see blemishes in so fine a character. In particular he blames her freedom of speech in expressing her resentment of persons so unguardedly, and tells her it lessens exceedingly the influence she might otherwise possess, and makes enemies. He apologises for thus writing, and says, "It proceeds from the great esteem and respect I have for you." In reply, the duchess thanks him for his letter and says, as she has read Montaigne, she knows

<sup>1</sup> Treasury Papers, Record Office.

there is no greater proof of friendship than venturing to disoblige a friend in order to serve them. "I am entirely of his opinion," she continues, "and even when I be not convinced that I have done wrong I always take it kindly, and therefore I am confident I shall never forget it, though you desire me, and in this I imitate your humble servant Di (her granddaughter), for when I made a sort of apology for telling her anything that may prevent mischief to her, she always says she loves me better for telling her of any fault, and I desire you will believe my nature is the same, and I beg you will not have the least scruple in telling me anything you think, for I am not so partial to myself not to know that I have many imperfections."

The following year was marked by the death of George I. The King, not having seen his German dominions for two years, had set out for Hanover on the 3rd June. He embarked on board the *Caroline* yacht at Greenwich, and landed at the Hague on the 7th. He stayed one or two nights at Vaert, and then proceeded to Delden between 10 and 11 P.M. Here he supped heartily, eating part of a melon, which disagreed with his digestion, for the following day he was taken ill in his coach, and complained he had lost the use of one hand. On his arrival at Linden he could eat nothing, and was bled. His attendants advised him to remain at Linden, but he insisted on going on, urging his coachman to drive as fast as possible. About ten o'clock that night he arrived at his brother's (the Bishop of Osnaburgh) palace, where he fell into a lethargic slumber, and expired about eleven o'clock next day, the 11th June. The King's body was conveyed to Hanover for interment in the family vault. He left only one son, George II., and one daughter, married to the King of Prussia.

## CHAPTER XIII

### UNDER GEORGE II

(1727-1744)

"What is the worst of woes, that wait on age,  
What stamps the wrinkle deepest on the brow?  
To view each loved one blighted from Life's page,  
And be alone on earth as I am now."

GEORGE II. was crowned at Westminster on the 11th of October; the day was celebrated with universal rejoicing.

His eldest son, Prince Frederick, born in 1707, whom his parents cordially disliked, had remained in Hanover, and did not arrive in this country until the end of 1717. Having been represented as an idiot and a driveller by the Jacobites and other enemies, his appearance when he was introduced to the Privy Council as Prince of Wales created a favourable impression.

He became the centre of the Opposition, and gathered round him the clever writers of the day whom Walpole had estranged, and whose pens were consequently turned against the minister. Catering for popularity, the prince remained till the day of his death a thorn in the side of the King, who seems hardly to have possessed natural affection for any of his children. George II. was an utterly selfish man of low tastes; how he obtained and kept the affection of Queen Caroline, who was so superior to him in intellect and character, must always be a matter of wonder.







*King George II.*  
*From the original painting by John Verelsteden*  
*in the National Portrait Gallery.*



nursed as he ought to have been. The Duchess of Marlborough had much experience in illness, as we have seen, and considered herself a good authority on these matters.

She wrote to an unknown correspondent :—

“WINDSOR LODGE, *September 22, 1729.*

“In all conditions it must be a very sensible pleasure to receive a very kind letter from so valuable a friend as your Lordship has allways been to me, and I am entirely satisfy'd that the Characters which you are pleased to give of both the dear brothers are very just. I saw myself all that you describe of the Present Lord Sunderland, and I am sure that he had much rather have dyed a younger Brother than have succeeded to a Crown by the loss of one he so dearly and so justly loved. He is perfectly honest, and has his Mother's good nature, with a great many other very good qualities. However, it is a heavy misfortune to me to lose so valuable a man from the only branch in my family that I could ever hope for any satisfaction or the least comfort ; but, after the terrible misfortunes that have befallen me (some of which were very uncommon), I believe nothing but distemper will kill. Your Lordship has many relations that will travel, and therefore I will trouble you with some account of a paper, signed by two men that are called Physicians in France, from which I hope those that you wish well will take warning, and rather trust to nature than be directed by men that are so ignorant, as I believe Doctors are abroad, who have acted directly contrary to all the best Physicians that I ever knew in England, who I never saw bleed or Purge but at the very beginning of a feaver ; but from the 13th September to the 24th, which is as far as the account mentions, they

gave poor Lord Sunderland four strong Purges and Eleven Blisters, most of them Purging, and (on) the 14th September, seven days after the Physicians were with him, they bled him the sixth time, though they say in the same paper that his feet were so cold, and half-way up his legs, that they wrapt them in warm cloths to bring warmth into them. He had not one blister in all his illness, though he was ill several days before the 13th with violent pains in his head. That would have been one of the first things that our Physicians would have apply'd. The fourth day after the Doctors came they gave him a decoction of Bark, which I have heard Doctors say is good for nothing. After this they ordered him the Bark in something that was purging, whereas our Physicians upon some occasions put some drops of Laudanum to make it stay. The reason they gave for not putting on Blisters was that Lord Sunderland had so much vivacity, but the truth is that they are such Blockheads that they don't comprehend the advantage of them. I am sure, from reading these facts, your Lordship will think as I do, that never any man was so perfectly thrown away as poor Lord Sunderland was by Ignorant men. He has shown that he had a very strong Constitution by holding out so many days with these Murthring Physicians. He never at any time either eat or drank too much, and therefore there is no doubt but he might have escaped had he (had) any tolerable advice; and if they had acquainted me with his illness at the very first approach of it, I could have sent good medicines, of which I know they have none, and a good physician, which, by the account I have had, might have been at Paris time enough to have sav'd him, and would have followed him myself; for it is not a Difficult Journey to have made, Especially for one that lov'd him so tenderly as I did. But the



misfortune was that he had nobody with him that were not too young to see the Danger he was in, though I have no doubt of their loving him; but he is at quiet now, and I have only to Lament the Inexpressible loss of him to me and to his whole family, who am much more than I can express,—For ever your Lordship's most faithfull and most obliged humble servant,  
S. MARLBOROUGH."

In the original the signature only is in the duchess's handwriting.

It is evident the duchess felt her grandson's death keenly, and it is possible that the shock of his loss affected her health, which is mentioned in the following letter. Sarah's passionate nature showed itself in many ways, and she possessed the temperament whose well-being would be affected by grief.

In February 1729 Lady A. Irwin wrote to Lord Carlisle: "The old Duchess of Marlborough is very ill, and likely soon to make her heirs happy. The young duchess has made herself very particular upon Mr. Congreve's death; he left her executrix, by which she gets £7000 in money, I think one may say to the injury of a great many poor relatives, and some say to a son by Mrs. Bracegirdle (the actress). The duchess buried him very handsomely, and showed so great an affection for his (Congreve's) dead body that she quitted her house and sat by his corpse till he was interred."

A monument was erected in Westminster Abbey with the following inscription: "Set up by Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, as a mark how dearly she remembered the happiness and honour she enjoyed in the friendship of so worthy and honest a man."

"Happiness perhaps and honour," said the old Duchess Sarah, when she wrote the epitaph. Hen-



rietta spent Congreve's bequest on a diamond necklace. Her friendship with him was evidently a very sore subject with her mother, and probably was the original cause of friction. In one letter the duchess says: "She (Henrietta) has starts of giving 100 guineas to a very low poet that will tell her that she is what she knows she is not, which I think so great a weakness that I had rather give money not to have such verses made publick."

Henrietta had a son, William, who became Marquis of Blandford when his mother became Duchess of Marlborough.<sup>1</sup>

She had also two daughters; the elder, Henrietta, married Thomas Holles, Duke of Newcastle, in 1717, and the second, Mary, married Thomas, Duke of Leeds.

Lord Godolphin, Henrietta's husband, was a very amiable man. He frequently corresponded with Sarah upon matters of business, and remained on friendly terms with her to the end of his life.

Notwithstanding her differences with her eldest daughter, Sarah gave her a lodge in Windsor Park, which she occupied until her death in 1733.

Lady Anne Egerton was brought up by the Duchess of Marlborough, who took compassion on her, thinking her neglected after the Duchess of Bridgewater's death. Lady Anne married, in 1725, Wriothsley, third Duke of Bedford. The Duke of Bridgewater, her father, married a second time—Lady Rachel Russell, daughter of the second Duke of Bedford—therefore Lady Anne's sister-in-law became her stepmother. Lady Anne was not a very affectionate or dutiful granddaughter.

On 25th October 1731 the Duchess of Marlborough

<sup>1</sup> He married, in 1729, Maria Catherine D'Jong, sister of the Countess Denbigh, but died childless in 1731.

presented Charles, Earl of Sunderland, with the sword that had been given to his grandfather by Charles of Austria, when about to visit the court of Queen Anne on his way to claim the throne of Spain in 1712. It had been the Duke of Marlborough's wish that his grandson should have this most valued sword, the hilt of which was set with diamonds. To this bequest of the duke's, the duchess added a pair of diamond buckles of great value.

It is not to be wondered at that a few years later, when she heard of the young man's extravagance, and his having recourse to money-lenders, she brought an amicable suit to restrain Charles from parting with the historical sword. The duchess came into court, and quaintly pleaded her cause thus: "That sword, my lord would have carried to the gates of Paris. Am I to live to see the diamonds picked off one by one, and lodged at the pawnbroker's?"<sup>1</sup>

The following year Charles married a Miss Trevor, whose father, having been an enemy of the Duke of Marlborough's, the duchess particularly disliked, therefore she had no love for Lady Sunderland or any of her eight sisters. Lady Anne Spencer, now married to William, Viscount Bateman, had been the means of introducing her brother to the Trevor family, an offence the duchess never forgave.

Lady Anne, who had been brought up by the duchess, had not the amiable qualities of her sister Di. Disputes were frequent with her grandmother, much temper being shown on both sides. It is said that on one occasion Sarah blackened the granddaughter's portrait, and left it in the corridor, having written underneath, "She is in within."

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Lady Mary Wortley Montague," edited by Lord

Charles was not a favourite with his grandmother either. He appears to have been wild and unprincipled; at least later on the duchess said she did not think he knew right from wrong. On the death of his aunt Henrietta, in 1733, Lord Sunderland succeeded to the title and some of her fortune; but the estates did not come to him until Duchess Sarah's death, eleven years later. He was in the second regiment of Guards, which he commanded in 1742, resigning his commission when he came into his property.

According to Horace Walpole, the Duchess of Marlborough, having quarrelled with her grandson after he became Duke of Marlborough, expelled him and his wife from the lodge she had lent him in Windsor Park. She then set up a puppet-show, representing the eight Misses Trevor tearing up the shrubs, while the young duchess was seen carrying off a hen-coop under her arms. If the story is true, it was probably a peep-show such as were then made to amuse children. The figures were cut out of cardboard or moulded in wax, and were arranged with a painted background and enclosed, with a small hole for looking through. People cast about for something entertaining, and the duchess, not being partial to the eight Misses Trevor, conceived this brilliant device to amuse her guests! At this day grown-up people are not above paying a penny to look at a mechanical toy worked by electricity. Human nature was the same in the seventeenth century; but there were fewer toys, and these were simpler in construction.

Charles Duke of Marlborough's other sister, Lady Diana Spencer, known as "Di," had from a child lived with her grandmother, to whom she was devoted, and who in return lavished great affection upon her, and was continually thinking of her welfare. In one of her

letters the duchess inquires of Mrs. Jennens what she would recommend for a swelled neck that Lady Diana was suffering from. On another occasion Sarah expressed great satisfaction because the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline, called her Di back, and bid her hold up her head, "which," added the duchess, "I was always telling her."

Lady Diana, who had all the beauty of her mother, acted as secretary to her "Mamma Duchess," as she called her grandmother, and there are numerous letters of business written by her. In 1731 she became the wife of Lord John Russell, a brother of the Duke of Bedford, who had married her cousin, Lady Anne Egerton. The Duchess of Marlborough was much pleased at her favourite granddaughter's prospects, and wrote to Lady Mary Wortley Montague upon the subject: "I propose to myself more satisfaction than I thought there had been in store for me." Lord John Russell succeeded his brother as fourth duke the year after his marriage, and later became Secretary of State and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. One son was born to them, but died an infant. Lady Di survived the child three years, dying in 1735, to the great grief of her grandmother.

Her brother, Jack Spencer, born in 1708, was the duchess's favourite grandson after Robert's death. He and his elder brother Charles had been educated at home, but in their early youth were sent abroad to finish their education and to gain a knowledge of the world, which possibly they would have been better without, as they both became very wild and dissipated. The duchess wrote to Lady Mary Wortley Montague:—

"I believe you have heard me say that I desired to die when I had disposed well of her (Lady Di), but I

come down to us, but not one coarse word or expression, and this is saying much, considering the times in which she lived.

To be agreeable in society it is necessary to have a certain amount of small talk like current coin: bank-notes and dividend warrants are very valuable assets, but are not much use to the ordinary traveller unless he can convert them into cash. So it is with conversation; much knowledge may be hidden behind a grave exterior, but of what benefit is that in society unless it can be changed or broken up into small portions for others to profit by, and a fair exchange made? Sparkling wit and lively repartee are like a ball or shuttlecock tossed lightly from one to another, the quicker the better. It should not be let drop. This, perhaps, is only possible in a small circle of people well known to each other, with more or less similar tastes. It could be looked for in the duchess's time, when Lady Mary Wortley Montague, Pope, and Chesterfield, and in former days Steele and Addison, and many other notable wits gathered at her house, she herself being the most brilliant and entertaining of hostesses.

One wonders what could be the bond of union between Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, and Lord Chesterfield, a man thirty-four years her junior, young enough to be her son. They had, in common, courtly manners, handsome appearance, agreeable conversation, and knowledge of the world. It is easy to understand the duchess being delighted with Lord Chesterfield's company; he must have found her also very entertaining, and admired her for her vigorous intellect. It was he who said to Voltaire, "*J'aime l'esprit même quand je le trouve dans un coquin.*" How much more then where it was to be found in the pleasant house of a handsome, agreeable woman of the world, who delighted in sur-



rounding herself with clever people. That the duchess was sincerely grateful to Lord Chesterfield for his attentions is proved by her will, in which she says, "He never had any cause to give himself any trouble about me." She left him, out of the regard she had for him and the infinite obligations she received at his hands, £20,000, a diamond ring, and the reversion of the Wimbledon estate. Although acquainted from his first coming to court, Sarah's friendship probably dated from the time of Lord Chesterfield's dismissal from office in consequence of his opposition to Walpole's Excise Bill in 1733. This alone would have been a sufficient claim to the duchess's regard. The Duchess of Marlborough was no admirer of Sir Robert Walpole, as has been shown. She had taken umbrage over the dispute about St. James's Park, and he took no pains to conciliate the proud duchess; but she had occasion to correspond with him about business, notwithstanding the armed neutrality between them, and the subject was Windsor Park. Her rangership occupied a good deal of her talents and attention.

Early in the preceding reign the duchess estimated the necessary repairs there would cost £2280; the palings were everywhere in bad order, and she was afraid the deer would get out. Among the Treasury papers for 1727 is a memorandum to remind Sir Robert Walpole that some time before it was desired to plough up a portion of the park where the land was poor. The duchess said she could plough up about 200 acres every year at no charge to the Crown, if she had an order from the Treasury, but would not undertake it without orders. It is doubtful whether the order was forthcoming.

She got no thanks for her endeavours to do the best she could for the Crown; it would have suited the Treasury far better if she had been less conscientious

and allowed things to slide. Here is one of her letters on the subject :—

*The DUCHESS to SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.*

*"1st January 1731.*

"SIR,—I confess that your letter surprised me extremely, and you will excuse me if I am desirous of some explanation of it.

"You tell me that you have laid the several proposals I made relating to Windsor Park before his Majesty, and that he is not disposed to do anything upon them. I presume you do not mean by this that his Majesty will entirely abandon all further care of the Park and let it run quite to ruin ; but only that he will not be put to any extraordinary expense upon account of beautifying it.

"My letter to you, Sir, consisted of several parts. I apprehend some of them might have been for his Majesty's service and diversion, being told game cannot be preserved unless some corn be sown in the Park, and that for want of some ploughing the ground was almost all overrun with molehills, thistles and other weeds that destroyed the grass, a great deal of which is wanted for the feeding a sufficient stock of deer to answer his Majesty's demands, besides the new addition of the red deer let into the Park. It is not for me to argue upon this matter, and I hope nobody will imagine that I had the least interest to myself in mending the ground by ploughing small pieces at a time, as his Majesty should direct ; but as he does not approve of it, I am very well satisfied.

"The other matters contained in my letter are not proposals of mine as you term them, but representations of facts, of things that are absolutely necessary to be done. It is very easy to conceive that when the Crown

has not disbursed for a great number of years many necessary repairs must be wanting.

"To avoid solicitations I have done many things at my own expense that never any Ranger did before, but that cannot always be expected from me, tho' I shall never desire the Crown should be at any charge for the Lodge that I make use of, tho' 'tis as much the King's as the Keepers' Lodges are, whose Lodges are in so bad a condition that some of the poor men have been forced to be at the expense themselves to keep out the weather. I believe you will find it better husbandry to lay out at present a little money in necessary repairs, than to be forced to rebuild them when they are fallen down.

"The rails are in many places rotten and in some places fallen, and if there be no fence the deer will run out of the Park and the cattle of other people will get into it. Many of the gates also want repair, and these are things I apprehend to be so absolutely and immediately necessary that I make no question that when his Majesty is apprised of them he will order them to be forthwith done.

"I hope you will order that the proper officers of the Crown do survey these matters and see whether they are not as I have represented."

From Windsor Lodge, in August 1735, Sarah addressed a letter to her grandson, the Duke of Newcastle, about a dispute she had with the Duke of St. Albans. It appears Marlborough had given St. Albans, who was Constable of the Keep, a key to Windsor Park, to walk in it at his pleasure, little imagining that his civility would be requited in the way it was by having other keys made from it, the Duke of St. Albans distributing them as he thought fit, coming into the Park with his coach and chaise, and making use of it

other respects, just as if he had been the Ranger, to the duchess's intense indignation. She says: "Nobody but the Royal Family and the Ranger were ever suffered to go in their coaches." The duchess protests that this is a very bad precedent, which may be attended with bad consequences, and in process of time bring difficulties on the Crown itself. She asks, how can others who live at Windsor be refused this favour, which has been granted to the Duke of St. Albans simply as such? Other distinguished people who had resided at the Keep had not had such a privilege, amongst these being Prince Rupert, a nephew of Charles I., the Dukes of Northumberland and Kent, Lord Cobham, and Lord Carlisle, who had never thought of asking for it. "But," says the duchess, "though his predecessors never had it, will his successors for the future ever be contented without it?" She cannot flatter herself that anything she may say will get this leave revoked, so begs to know whether the duke is to have the privilege of giving keys to whom he pleases, and asks, "Is everybody to be allowed to come in their coaches and chaises? But as to his putting cattle (in), and authorising his gamekeepers to kill game for his own use and the Dowager Duchess of St. Albans—this I take to be an encroachment on my grant, and that I presume is not intended, nor can I be content to suffer it."

This is certainly rather amusing, her Grace being so indignant at the Duke of St. Albans driving in Windsor Park, after her own desire to drive in St. James's Park had been frustrated! Was it a way of turning the tables upon her adversaries, and at the same time of upholding the rights of the Crown?

In 1736, when Queen Caroline was making her Merlin Cave and carrying out other improvements at Richmond, she wished to shorten the road to her house



there, and for this purpose commissioned Sir R. Walpole to obtain the Duchess of Marlborough's consent to cut through some of her property at Wimbledon. Lord Godolphin, who was employed to interview Sarah, added, "'Twas nothing but what one gentleman would grant to another who was his neighbour." The duchess said, in reply, "I should certainly oblige any indifferent person in such a thing that had not used me ill, but her Majesty has been pleased in a public drawing-room to say things of the late Duke of Marlborough that shocked me very much, and is a shame to repeat." However, on reflection, Sarah, thinking it would be easier to comply than to have to tell everybody why she refused, consented, on condition that a certain sum to be agreed upon should be distributed amongst the poor, who had a right to use the common over which the road was to be made.

The Queen was willing to pay a sum not exceeding £400. The duchess suggested £300 as being quite enough. Accordingly, Mr. Selwyn paid that amount to the steward of the court for distribution, and the transaction was at an end.

Some little time after, Queen Caroline sent to Sarah to "admit" her trustee to a copyhold of the duchess's property, considering that she had the right on account of the former bargain. Sarah says, "This would have been a great prejudice to my estate at Wimbledon, for the law of that manor is, 'that if anybody buys ever so small a copyhold, they may buy all the rest of the manor without paying any fine.' Sir John Rushout," continues the duchess, "has an estate under the same tenure, and so have others. I could not consent to this. It might be a great prejudice to my family, upon whom I had settled this estate."

The Queen considered the duchess's refusal very



disrespectful, and spoke indignantly on the subject to several persons, among others to the Speaker of the House of Commons, at one of her drawing-rooms. She asked him whether she could not force the duchess to accept a fine, and surrender and admit her trustee. He made a very low bow, and, without asking under what tenure the manor was held, answered, "Her Majesty had but to begin the suit, and the law would force the duchess to admit whom her Majesty pleased." The Queen, putting her hand to her breast, declared "upon her honour she would go to law with the Duchess of Marlborough, whom she knew loved law, and she would not let the affair blow over without obliging her with a suit!"

Sarah thereupon consulted her lawyers, who assured her that the Queen could have no legal power to force her to acquiesce. "As civil as lawyers generally are to the Crown," her Majesty's council told her she could not do it; the Queen, however, was determined to be revenged. She sent to tell the duchess she was in her power; that if she would not comply, her grant from the Crown of £500 a year for Windsor Park would be stopped. The duchess could hardly believe this threat would be carried out. However, a little while later Sir Robert Walpole gave directions to the Treasury to stop the allowance, saying it was by the King's orders, although probably his Majesty knew nothing of the matter. The Duchess of Marlborough sent Sir Robert a copy of her grant, with a protest against the injustice of breaking through any part of it. Her letter had no effect.

Some of her friends advised her to go to law, and said she might well bring the account of money she had laid out to the Treasury to be paid. The duchess says in a long letter to Lord Wilmington, written in 1742:—

"I was convinced nothing could be done at Law against his Majesty, nor did I think anything laid before *that* Treasury would be of use where Sir Robert Walpole was the head, and had done this mean injustice to please the Queen. Therefore I resolved to be quite silent, though I had lost nearly three years' allowance as arrears due from King George I., his Majesty saying, 'He was not obliged to pay his father's debts!'

"As the keepers had families, I paid what was due to them out of my own pocket; and all other charges of the Park I had paid, which was all ready money, not to be received again but as the Crown thought fit.

"All this shows that nothing is to be got by being Ranger of this Park but the fattening a few Runts (sheep) to eat, and milk from the cows. But as I have laid out a great many thousand pounds in building, 'tis an agreeable place to live in, though 'tis too much to lay out in what will return to the Crown, and I am sorry I have done it."

We also get from the same letter information about the spending of the money. Her Grace says, "The allowance that was taken away paid five keepers and their bills for taking care of the deer, carts, horses, and making hay and buying it when the Park would not produce it, and other things necessary to the establishment of a King's Park. I have the honour of paying all charges of furnishing a great deal of venison for his Majesty's service, the Royal Family, and also the nobles. I think I might send lean deer, which I have never done yet, though hay has been sometimes at £5 a ton." Sarah concludes her letter by telling Lord Wilmington that "she had saved the timber from being plundered in a park near the King's chief palace, and if he is of opinion that no reason or justice can take place,

she will trouble nobody any more in the affair; for I confess," says Sarah, "'tis too much to pay such heavy taxes, and likewise make what I call a great present to a King to whom I was never obliged. I call it a Present to be obliged to pay the expenses of his Majesty's Park."

The duchess, as Ranger of Windsor Park, upheld the rights of the Crown and administered the funds at her disposal to the best advantage. Sarah was so unbending in any matter she considered right and just, that she was not likely to be popular in an age of corruption. The former unsettled state of the country weakened men's moral fibre, so that bribery was common, and men hedged and wavered in their aims for the sake of expediency. Even the clergy were not exempt from this defect. It was rare to meet any one of Sarah's strength of character and purpose.

In August 1736 we find the duchess at Windsor enjoying the country. She writes in her memoirs that she would have loved to roam through the gardens and Park, but is generally wrapped up in flannels and wheeled up and down her room in a chair. She reflects that she has too many visitors in London, who have little sense, and are not capable of friendship and truth. Nor does she wish to see Blenheim again, as in her lodge she finds everything convenient without trouble.

The following year, 1737, the duchess paid a short visit to the house she had built at Wimbledon. She writes, "Came yesterday from Wimbledon. Though it stands high, it is upon clay, an ill sod, very damp, and, I believe, an unhealthy place, which I shall very seldom live in, and consequently have thrown away a vast sum of money upon it to little purpose."

The following year Queen Caroline died, after a short illness. She was an irreparable loss to the King and the nation, and Sir Robert Walpole lost a firm friend.



A rhyme circulated in London on the occasion of the death reads as follows :—

"Oh cruel death ! why hast thou been so unkind  
To take our Queen and leave our King behind?"

Her funeral was called private, but it cost £60,000. Many official persons were summoned to attend, but the Lord Mayor, Sir John Bernard, not being in favour with the ministers on account of his proposal to reduce the interest on money in the funds, was not included. This omission was considered a slight to the city.

The Duke of Ormonde, writing from Leyden on 5th December 1737, mentions Mr. Horace Walpole (the elder) being much alarmed to hear of Queen Caroline's danger, for she was a fast friend to his brother, Sir Robert, on account of the extravagant jointure he procured for her. He says, "Mr. Walpole thinks she will be a great loss to the whole party, as by fawning and flattering and weeping she used to restrain the Elector (George II.) from many excesses, and often helped the ministers to bring him to some sort of reasoning."

The immense wealth Caroline left—one million in specie and £1,200,000 in bank-notes, besides very large sums in mortgages in land and in other people's names—"occasioned much talk, as it seemed impossible she could have acquired all this honestly."

Queen Caroline refused to admit the Prince of Wales when on her deathbed, although he pleaded to be allowed to see her. Whether this refusal was for the King's sake, or because of her aversion to her son, it is impossible to say. The prince had married, in 1735, Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, who was devoted to him.

A contemporary speaks well of the prince,<sup>1</sup> saying

<sup>1</sup> George Virtue, in his MSS. collection.

he was humane, noble, benevolent, and affable; generous and friendly to servants; loved science and art; had a taste for literature; was fond of painting and music, being sufficiently skilled to take part in concerts; that he took great pleasure in his garden, possessed an excellent memory, spoke several languages fluently and well, and appeared always pleasant and lively. Prince Frederick's appearance was attractive. He had a fair skin, light hair and eyes, but was not tall or very robust. His principal fault seems want of moral force of character, the foundation of all virtue, without which the most amiable qualities cannot impress or carry weight.

But what a bringing up! What chance had he, when his own parents had no belief in him, and were so embittered against him? When he died in 1746, after taking cold while working in his garden at Kew, the following epitaph was circulated, which speaks pretty plainly that, although he was not much respected, he was more loved than any other member of the Royal Family:—

“ Here lies Fred,  
Who was alive and is dead.  
Had it been his father,  
I had much rather;  
Had it been his brother,  
Much better than another;  
Had it been his sister,  
No one would have missed her;  
Had it been the whole generation,  
Still better for the nation;  
But since it is Fred,  
Who was alive and is dead,  
There is no more to be said.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1736 the Duchess of Marlborough erected the St. Albans almshouses. They are a worthy monument of her great heart and mind.

<sup>1</sup> “Memoirs of Horace Walpole,” by Warburton.



This handsome structure—the thirty-six dwellings are all under one roof—is built of red brick, on a practical and original plan, forming three sides of a quadrangle. In the centre is a fine cedar, planted by the duchess's own hands. Over the main entrance are the Marlborough arms. There are thirty-six inmates, who have each four rooms; there are separate entrances to every four dwellings, with garden allotments at the back of the building. The charity was intended to benefit persons over sixty years of age, who had an income of £20 a year, and their relations are allowed to take care of them. Each inmate receives an allowance of five shillings a week, and doctor's attendance free.

The original deed bears date 2nd June 1736, and the trustees her Grace appointed were the Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham; Sir Thomas Deane, knight, Lord Chief Justice of his Majesty's Common Pleas at Westminster; Walter Plumer, Esq., of Cavendish Square; and James Stephens, city of Westminster, Doctor of Physic.

In the deed it is said :—

“The Duchess of Marlborough determined to settle and establish an almshouse at St. Albans, being the place of her birth, where her paternal estate lyeth, for the comfortable support of thirty-six persons, one half poor men and one half poor women.

“For this purpose the estate of Crowhurst in the county of Surrey, also another in Sussex and Kent, late the estate of Edward Gibbon, one of the South Sea directors, and purchased by the Duchess of the Trustees appointed by Act of Parliament, also an estate in Marston Gobbelt in the county of Warwick, late the estate of Robert Surman, Deputy-Cashier of the South Sea Company, and purchased by the said Duchess of

the Trustees appointed by Act of Parliament, particulars of which said estates *do more fully appear in the Deeds enrolled in Chancery whereby the same were conveyed to the Duchess and her heirs.* The sum of £20 to be paid half-yearly to the Rector of the Abbey Church or to the Vicar of the Parish Church of St. Peter in St. Albans, to overlook the poor placed in the said Almshouses, to watch their conduct and see that they live soberly, piously. Any rents and profits of the premises, any sums accruing from the sale of timber over and above the cost of Almshouses to be equally divided among the inmates, share and share alike, &c. &c.

"The Duchess reserves the power in her lifetime of making such changes as she should think fit. The owner of the Sandridge estate to have the right of choosing trustees in the event of the said Trustees neglecting to name or choose a new Trustee when required."

(The deed was signed at Marlborough House on the 7th of June 1736 by the Duchess and the Trustees.)

"Sealed and delivered (being first duly stamped) in the presence of

"CHRISTOPHER LOFFT.

"JEREMIAH LEWIS.

"Acknowledged by her Grace, the Duchess of Marlborough, before me.

(Signed) "J. BENNETT."

It has not been possible to discover how much the building cost or who was the architect, although the Earl of Burlington may have designed it, but the whole endowment and structure must have amounted to something between £30,000 and £50,000.

As a consequence of this noble gift, there is a feeling

of affection and regard for the memory of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, at St. Albans which is not to be found elsewhere.

While we are on the subject of St. Albans, there is an amusing account of an election in the autumn of 1737, which shows the duchess in a less favourable light, although it certainly gives us a glimpse of her great resource and cleverness. The candidate she supported was opposed by Lord Grimston, with whom the duchess had had some difference two years before. This nobleman in his youth had written a play, called "Love in a Hollow Tree," and had tried to get it acted, but without success, so accordingly had published it at his own expense. It had been unmercifully cut up by Pope and Swift. The former wrote :—

"Shades that to Bacon did virtue afford  
Are now the portion of a Booby Lord."

And Swift :—

"The Leaden Crown devolved to thee,  
Great Poet of the hollow tree !"

Pope here referred to Gorhamhurst Park, which had formerly been Lord Bacon's residence, and was then occupied by Lord Grimston. The author was not proof against these criticisms, and called in all copies of the play. At the time of the election they had become very scarce. The Duchess of Marlborough succeeded, however, in obtaining one for a guinea. She had a second edition printed with a frontispiece dedicated to the "Right Sensible the Lord of Flame," and a plate showing an ass wearing a coronet, and an elephant dancing on a tight-rope.<sup>1</sup> She caused a hundred copies to be distributed, and the play cried up and down the

<sup>1</sup> This book is very curious. It can be seen in the Museum at St. Albans.

streets during the election. This raised such a laugh against his lordship that it very much contributed to the return of his opponent.

The duchess took a great interest in the Windsor election of March 1738. The opposing sides were represented by Lord Vere (Nell Gwynne's grandson), eldest son of the Duke of St. Albans, and a gentleman supported by Charles, third Duke of Marlborough. The duchess writes with much violence on the subject, having strained relations with the Duke of St. Albans. She declared that the Duke of Marlborough's friend had the majority, but for all that Lord Vere was elected. She relates: "A poor soldier, whose arm was shot off under the Duke of Marlborough, and who had a pension from Chelsea College, was ordered to give his vote for Lord Vere, having a house at Windsor and a right to do it, and told if he did not, his pension would be taken away. To this he replied: 'I will venture starving rather than it shall be said that I voted against the Duke of Marlborough's grandson, after having followed his grandfather so many hundred leagues.'" Accordingly he voted against Lord Vere. The duchess goes on to say that she "rather hopes they will take away his pension, because she had sent him word that if they do, she will settle the same upon him for life."

The following letter,<sup>1</sup> written on the occasion of his father's death to Hugh, Earl of Marchmont, speaks for Sarah's generosity and kindness of heart:—

*"Wednesday, 1 o'clock, 1740.*

"I am but just awake, and they bring me the melancholy message your Lordship sent me of poor Lord Marchmont, which, as he has been so long ill, I am not so much surprised at, as I am sorry for, and I really

<sup>1</sup> Marchmont Papers.



think in so disagreeable a world as this is, since the stroke must be given some time or other, when it is over it is better for those that are gone than for friends that remain after them. Your Lordship will remember that I had a great mind once to have given you my legacy which I had desired you to accept of at my death in my lifetime, which I thought was not improper; but I found you did not like it and therefore I dropped it, but now I hope you will not take it ill, since I believe upon this occasion you may want money immediately, that I offer to send you £1000, which is half the legacy; and if you please you may call it so much lent, to which I can see no manner of objection; and if it be of the least use to you, it will very much oblige me who am and ever shall be, with the greatest esteem imaginable, your Lordship's most faithful and most humble servant,

"S. MARLBOROUGH."

The duchess held young Lord Marchmont in such high esteem and love that he evidently had much influence with her. Lord Chesterfield, writing to him as follows, implies as much: "I share the marks of your friendship to Mr. Pitt, looking upon everything that concerns him as personal to myself. I have not yet had an opportunity of speaking to him upon that, knowing his delicacy, but in the meantime pray encourage her Grace in so right and generous a resolution" (leaving Pitt some of her money).

Pitt first showed his talent for oratory in vigorously opposing the convention with Spain, brought about by Walpole in the interests of peace in 1737. This was an unpopular measure, and "was regarded as a resignation of our rights," because England was to refund £ a large sum as compensation for destroying the S fleet in 1718.



The Duchess of Marlborough felt strongly on the subject, and recognised Pitt's patriotic endeavours by remembering him in her will, no doubt encouraged thereto by his friend.

Sarah was a wonderful woman of business, keeping her accounts regularly, paying her debts promptly, investing her money with care.

She drew up a record of all the valuable pictures in her possession, and entered the price paid, or by whom given, and where bought. She also made out a list of jewellery, counting each pearl, and mentioning the weight of the diamonds.

The duchess went into the City at the age of seventy-nine to bid for Lord Yarmouth's estate, which she hoped to get, as it dovetailed with some of her property. She wished to leave a good fortune to her descendants, in hopes that they might be entirely independent of courts and parties, and expresses a wish that they will join only with a king when he has the welfare of the nation at heart, and a minister only when he is for the good of the king.

In the later years of her life the Duchess of Marlborough suffered severely from gout. She wrote in 1739: "I am a perfect cripple, and cannot possibly hold out long; and as I have little enjoyment of my life, I am very indifferent about it. It is impossible that one of my age and infirmity can live long, and one great happiness there is in death that one should never hear any more of anything they do in this world." These bitter reflections came from the lips of a woman still comely to look upon; her hair was still of the golden hue that she had been renowned for in her youth, and which it is said she kept so by the use of honey water. Her complexion was as fresh and clear as in days gone by. It is said that she in her old age was more admired than either of her

surviving daughters, well-known beauties. The duchess amused herself in her advanced years by writing down some of her recollections; also reflections on the politics of the day, and criticisms of persons she knew; and also compiled some memoirs. She wrote that Princess George of Denmark's journey to Nottingham in 1688 was purely accidental, never concerted, but occasioned by the great fright she was in when the King (James II.) returned from Salisbury. This is borne out by the Dartmouth papers, when it appears the princess and her favourite fled because Mrs. Churchill was threatened with arrest on account of her husband's desertion. She says the princess was not extravagant, and saved money out of the £50,000 a year which was paid to Prince George.

The duchess considered Queen Anne very well bred, treating her chief ladies and servants as her equals; she never refused to give in charity, and generously paid the pensions of her sister's servants.

Sarah's reflections upon life throw some light on her character. She wrote:—

"I have always thought that the greatest happiness of life was to love and value somebody extremely that returned it, and to see them often, and if one has an easy fortune that is what makes one's life pass away agreeably. But alas, there is much change in the world since I knew it first, that though one's natural pleasure is to love people, the generality of the world are something or other so disagreeable, that 'tis impossible to do it, and added to this I am a cripple lifted about like a child and very seldom free from . . . I think great things might still be done with hearts and good heads, but the demand is high; at least I can find very few that have

head or hearts. Some there are, I believe, of both sorts, but much the greatest number are those that are called men of understanding, and are so blinded with some low, present view of themselves, I fear that they will not be of any good use.

"I do really think that without having any of the old Roman virtue, it is wiser for any great man not to be a Prime Minister, which if we should ever happen to have a weak or an ill King must lead a terrible life, besides being very insecure, and consequently it would be best for a king as well as a nation and everybody that has any property or love to their posterity, to have all things done in Council without a Prime Minister, which I often have heard is the law.

"Virtue without power is as useless, as power without virtue is hurtful to us, but still we must hope on, and be contented with what we can't help."<sup>1</sup>

The duchess also read a good deal, and was very much amused with "Gulliver's Travels," and regretted such a clever writer as Swift had not been employed by the Whig party, saying: "I would have forgiven his slaps to the Duke of Marlborough and myself."

It is sad to contemplate that one who had received so much adulation at one time, and had tasted the sweets of power, should have had occasion to write so bitterly in her declining years. Her health at this time may partly have been to blame for this, but the blow she received when her services and friendship with Queen Anne came to an end must have been such that she could never quite get over it. Sarah, who had contemplated it for several years, drew up, with the assistance of Nathaniel Hooke, the Roman historian, an "Account

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Sarah."

of her Conduct at the Court of Queen Anne." She often spoke six hours a day giving directions to Hooke, and this sometimes from her bed. The book was published two years before her death, in 1742.

"Your friend" (Duchess of Marlborough), writes Lord Chesterfield to Hugh, Lord Marchmont, "has in your absence employed me as your substitute; and I have brought Mr. Hooke and her together, and having done that, will leave the rest to them, not caring to meddle myself in an affair which I am sure will not turn out at last to her satisfaction, though I hope and believe it will be to his advantage."

Alexander Pope was to be found among the Duchess of Marlborough's *entourage*, and he became very intimate with her during the last years of their joint lives. It was, no doubt, her agreeable art of conversation that delighted him, for he says he loved listening to her. He wrote to a friend: "There are many hours I could be glad to talk to, or rather to hear the Duchess of Marlborough. . . . I could listen to her with the same veneration and belief in all her doctrines as the disciple of Socrates gave to the words of the Master or he to his demon (for I know too she has a devil, whom in civility we call a genius)."

Pope was bound to recognise that it was a kindly devil, and Sarah, with her vigorous masculine temperament, became gentle with the frail poet, whose intellect she admired and whose weakness she pitied. Pope had also recommended Hooke to the duchess, who was so pleased with his literary help that she sent for Mr. Pope to consult him about the reward. He was away, probably at Bath, for he travelled a hundred miles to come to his friend's aid, and secured for Hooke a promise of £5000. Hooke tried to persuade the Duchess of Marl-

borough to become a Catholic, but it only ended in her quarrelling with him.

When the "Conduct" was published in 1742 it created a great sensation, being eagerly bought up, and read so attentively as to become, "even at this time of business, contests, wars and revolutions, the most popular topic of conversation." A long *résumé* was given of it in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for March 1742. Naturally there was much criticism, and some of her statements were contradicted by those who were of the opposite political party. There also appeared a pamphlet, entitled, "The Other Side of the Question," full of party spite, refuting nothing essential, and imputing selfish motives to the Duchess of Marlborough throughout. It has no historical value except the merit of showing how bitter was the party jealousy at this time.

Alexander Pope's letters to the duchess are full of gratitude for her kindness to him and admiration for herself, as the following passage shows: "I will not go to Bath while you stay there (London), that I may have the more opportunities of seeing you. I send the green book with many thanks by the bearer, which I have read over three times. I wish everybody you love may love you, and I am very sorry for any one that does not." In this last passage Pope does not appear very sincere. It might be taken in two senses. The green book thus referred to contained, first, some curious episodes in the life of the Duke of Marlborough during his stay abroad, 1712-1714, and after his return; secondly, an account of the unfortunate differences with the duchess and her children. It was written by Sarah herself, and was bound in green parchment.

In August 1741, Pope, who was living at Twickenham, sent the duchess a present of pine-apples, and asked permission to visit her at Wimbledon the follow-



ing Sunday. He says: "I will trouble your Grace's coach no further than to fetch me at whatever hour you like; and if you please I will bring with me a friend of my Lord Marchmont's, and therefore yours and mine. I have provided myself of some horses for my chariot to bring me back. I could not postpone any longer this pleasure, since you give me some hopes it was to lead to an honour I've so often been disappointed in, of seeing your Grace a few hours at Twickenham in my Grotto."

In another letter, not dated, he says:—

"What then does your Grace think of bringing me back in your coach about five and supping there; the moonlight favours your return, by which means (time) you will be tired of what you are pleased to call good company and I happy for six or seven hours together? In short, I will put myself into your power to bring, send, or expel me back as you please.<sup>1</sup>

"*P.S.*—The friend of Lord Marchmont's is yours already and cleared of all prepossessions, so that you can make no fresh conquests of him as you have done of me."

In another letter, "Lord Chesterfield and I will be with your Grace by dinner, if I understand him rightly, and perhaps stay all night. As to lodgings, I care not where I lodge so it be under Heaven's and your protection."

On August 3rd, 1743, Pope writes from Bath:—

"Your Grace will look upon my letters<sup>2</sup> as you do upon my visits, whenever I have a clear day or less du

<sup>1</sup> He evidently was engaged to dine with her at the fashionable "half after 3," and here proposes she should drive him back; his meaning is not very clear.

<sup>2</sup> H.M.C., Marlborough MSS.

than ordinary, I have an impulse that carries me to you, mind and body. I do not go or write so much to speak to you as to make you speak to me. If I am awake you enliven me, and if I nod you indulge me. I hope what I said about writing no more under Mrs. Allen's cover (where I think yours was opened), will not prevent you favouring me under Lord Chesterfield's. I have returned again to Bath and find he has not heard from your Grace, but I hear you live, and I hope with all the spirit with which you make life supportable, both to yourself and those about you . . . . I shall soon be on the wing for London. I wish indeed it was on the wing literally, for every earthly carriage is too rough for me, and a butterfly, though weak as a grasshopper, has the better of him by having wings. I have been trying the post-chaise to get the sooner home, but it is worse than a waggon for jolting, and would send my soul a longer journey than I care for taking, as long as two or three people remain in their bodies.

"*P.S.*—As you seldom receive any letters that do not first or last beg something of you, I beg you will order your keeper at Blenheim to send a buck to Bristol, directed to the Hon. Mrs. Murray at the Hot Well."

"TWICKENHAM, *Saturday*."

"I hoped to have seen your Grace once more before my journey to Bath, which I find since must be so soon as to-morrow evening or Monday morning. I hate to take leave, and so I should were I to go out of the world otherwise than by a written will, in which I commit by soul to God and my friends at parting. Both your Grace and Mr. Allen have done for me more than I am worth. He has come 100 miles to fetch me, and I think in gratitude I should stay with him for ever,

had I not equal obligation to come back to your Grace. I feel most sensibly not only kindnesses done to me but intended me, and I owe you more than I daresay you remember. First, I owe you my house and gardens at Twickenham, for you would have purchased them for me when you thought me fond of them.

"Secondly, I owe you a coach and horses, notwithstanding I fought you down to an armchair, and the other day I but named a house in town, and I saw with what attention you listened to it, and what you meant by that attention . . . . You were pleased to give my friend Allen an order last year for two bucks, which I think were to be claimed again this year as you worded it. Pray tell me if that was your intention or not. What can I say to your Grace? You think the same things, read the same books, like the same people, that I do. I can only wish one thing, I cannot doubt you will continue to do so. Be so good as to like me a little and be assured I shall love you extremely. I won't subscribe my name, that I may not be thought a very impudent fellow.

"But if you forgive me, pray write to tell me as much, and I will declare myself to all the world for your devoted servant."

That Sarah at eighty-two years of age had other admirers is evident by the following passage in one of Pope's letters :—

"I can assure you you are not only as well with Sir Timothy as possible, but his heart is uneasy in the fear he is not so with you; nay, he is almost suspicious that I am better with you. His heart is as good and his spirits as low, that he deserves double indulgence, and I really wish you would show him you are as good to him as you are, for any distinction

of that kind would make him happy. For my own part I desire no greater pleasure than to meet again all together, and see your Grace well enough to enjoy the conversation without one fool to vex you either within or without your doors."

It is quite possible Pope was not sincere when he wrote these epistles, that he only wished to flatter the duchess in order to get more out of her, but if this view is taken it speaks less well of him than for his poem of "Attossa," written before he knew her so intimately, and with which he was so pleased that he did not destroy it, even after Sarah gave him £1000 to do so.

The story goes that when he wrote this poem he first showed it to the Duchess of Buckingham, informing her that it was intended for the Duchess of Marlborough. Then he caused it to be shown to the Duchess of Marlborough, telling her it was intended for the Duchess of Buckingham, but Sarah was too shrewd to be deceived. She recognised herself, and took steps to prevent its publication. On Pope's death, which took place on 30th May 1744, she sent to Lord Marchmont, one of his executors, to ascertain whether the poem had been destroyed, and had the mortification to learn that it was already in the press with the last edition of Pope's works.

The other executor, Lord Bolingbroke, wrote :—

"It would be a breach of confidence which Pope reposed in me to give any one such of his papers, as I think no one should see. If there are any that may be injurious to the late Duke or her Grace either directly or indirectly and covertly, as I hope there are not, they shall be destroyed, and you shall be witness to their destruction. Copies of any such I hope and



believe there are none abroad, and I hope the Duchess will believe I scorn to take copies when I destroy originals."

However, in a few days he wrote again:—

"Our friend Pope it seems corrected and prepared for the press just before his death an edition of the four epistles that follow: 'Essay on Man,' printed and ready for publication. I am sorry for it, because if he could be excused for writing the character of Attossa formerly, there is no excuse for his design of publishing it after the favour you and I know of (the £1000 given to Pope). The character of Attossa is inserted. I have a copy of the book."

Lord Bolingbroke said of Pope, "I never in my life knew a man that had so tender a heart for his particular friend or a more general friendship for mankind."

Shortly before he died, Pope said, "I am so certain of the Soul's being immortal, that I seem to feel it within me as it were by intuition," and almost his last words were, "There is nothing that is meritorious but virtue and friendship, and indeed friendship itself is only a part of virtue."

It is curious how inconsistent is human nature and how easily it deceives itself. It was a mean trait in Pope's character and not an act of friendship to publish "Attossa," after his intimacy with the duchess and the favours he acknowledged and had received from her hands. It is no wonder that Sarah wrote so feelingly, "I find it a perpetual war in this world to defend oneself against knaves and fools." Only a few years before, Lord Cowper wrote to the duchess (probably when she was abroad in July 1714): "Mr. Sw



I am told, is retired to a vicarage he has in Northampshire, and complaining, nothing but perjury, treachery, and lying is to be met with in this town, which makes him resolved to try and find Innocence in the country. When he complains, sure it must be very bad."

The following letters of the Duchess of Marlborough, written to Lord Marchmont, are of interest as showing how her thoughts were influenced by Pope's opinions at this time of her life, so nearly drawing to a close:—

*"3rd March 1742.*

"MY LORD,—I give you many thanks for the favour of your letter, and it is a pleasure to me to find that you approve of my inclination in choosing a quiet life in the country, rather than being at London. . . . I am glad you had any success in the House of Lords, and as you are a very young man, it may happen to grow better; but if they do not, it is certainly right to do all in one's power, that can contribute to it. . . . I think that every man that struggles to oppose what is against reason and the laws deserves to be esteemed and praised as highly as ever Mr. Pope could do it. I think myself much obliged, both to your Lordship and to him, for having the least thought of coming to see me; but at this time, as the gout when people are old does not fix in any one part, which though very painful it ends in giving you ease, mine is always upon me in some part or other, and gives me a good deal of uneasiness, so much that I cannot have any pleasure in conversation; and besides my family is now in a good deal of disorder by having sick servants; but I think I am in no present danger of death; and when it does come I hope I shall bear it patiently, though I am not arrived at so much philosophy as not to think torturing pain an evil; that is the only thing I now dread, for death is unavoidable, and I

cannot find that anybody has yet demonstrated whether it is a good thing or a bad one. Pray do not think me wicked in saying this, and if you talk to Mr. Pope of me, endeavour to keep him my friend, for I do firmly believe in the immortality of the soul as much as he does, though I am not learned enough to have found out what it is."

And another :—

*"15th March 1742.*

MY LORD,—I have this day had the pleasure of receiving your letter and Mr. Pope's, which gave me a great deal of pleasure notwithstanding all your jokes upon me. You are pleased to call me the head of the school of Philosophy, and very obligingly press me to give you opportunities of improving yourselves. I think you may very well give me that title, since I immediately found out, that what you desired of me would fix me stronger in my opinion, that there was nothing so good for me as retirement, and if I could receive letters from you and Mr. Pope as you had leisure, I would never come to town as long as I live. In that way of conversing I should have all the pleasure that I can possibly propose without the disappointment when Mr. Pope falls asleep, nor the dread of your taking leave because you are weary. . . . I shall always be pleased to see your Lordship and Mr. Pope when you will be so bountiful as to give me any part of your time. . . . As for my dear friend Socrates, I believe we have no such men in this country, and yet I am not perfectly satisfied even with him; for I think being unconcerned at dying was more reasonable at a great age, and being quite weary of the world, which could give him no pleasure no more than it can me . . . but notwithstanding this I like him better than any other of the philosophers. As for his showing such spirits as he did in the conversation after he had

taken poison, I imagine that it was an easy death that came by degrees, and he could talk and died much easier than our physicians treat us when they blister us and put frying-pans upon our heads, after it is demonstrated we cannot live. I find you are as ignorant what the soul is as I am. But though none of my philosophers demonstrate plainly that, I do think there must be rewards and punishments after this life, and I have read lately that there was an opinion that the soul never died, that it went into some other man or beast. That seems in my way of thinking to be on the side of the argument for the immortality of the soul, and though the philosophers prove nothing to my understanding certain, yet I have a great mind to believe that Kings and first Minister's souls when they die go into chimney-sweepers. . . . This I think would be more punishment, though not so much as they deserve. What gave me this thought of a chimney-sweeper was an accident. My servants that are very careful of me, were fearful that having a fire night and day four months together in my chamber (thought I might be frightened), when I could not rise out of my bed if the chimney was on fire, and persuaded me to have it swept, which I consented to, and one of the chimney-sweepers was a little boy, a most miserable creature without shoes, stockings, breeches, or shirt. When it was over, a servant of mine went to Windsor with him to equip this poor creature with what he wanted, which cost very little, not being so well dressed as the last Privy Seal (Lord Harvey)! and as I could not be sure the souls of these chimney-sweepers had come from great men, I could not repent of their being so much overpaid as they were. This letter will be as long as a Chancery bill. . . . As soon as I have fixed the day for going to Marlborough House I will give my two scholars notice of it, whom I had rather see

than anybody there, and am with the greatest truth,—  
Your most obliged and most humble servant,

“S. MARLBOROUGH.”

The duchess's health not permitting her to visit the opera, she purchased a mechanical organ for £1000, which played eight tunes, and obliged her to think it gave her the same pleasure. The organ had been well spoken of by Handel.

The great composer was often a guest of Lord Burlington's, who lived at the mansion known to this day by that name. Pope, who often met him there, one day asked his friend Arbuthnot what he thought of Handel as a musician. Dr. Arbuthnot, who had taste for music, replied, “Conceive the highest you can of his abilities, and they are far beyond anything you can conceive.”

Pope, however, did not appreciate Handel's performances, which he said gave him no more pleasure than the airs of a common ballad-singer.

The Duchess of Marlborough was of a different opinion. She appreciated good music. In former days she supported Buononcini against all rivals, and by her opposition Handel's first opera was ruined; but in later years she, through their mutual friends, became acquainted with the composer, for tradition says he played on the old organ of Woodstock Church. Under whose auspices did he visit this place except under her Grace's? Possibly it was here he asked the organist to allow him to play the congregation out, to which he cordially consented. Handel sat himself down, and played in such a masterly fashion that, instead of leaving, the congregation remained to listen. The organist, becoming impatient, told Handel *he* could never play them out, and advised him to desist. A few bars from the usual performer quickly had the desired effect. Handel had a

violent temper, to which he sometimes gave way. When conducting concerts for the Princess of Wales,<sup>1</sup> if the ladies of the court talked during the performance, his wig became agitated, and the princess perceiving this used to exclaim, "Hush, hush! Handel is angry."

Only a short time before Sarah's death, the question of Windsor Park crops up again. The duchess corresponded with Mr. Scrope on the subject. The letters are of interest.<sup>2</sup>

*The DUCHESS to MR. SCROPE.*

"11th September 1744.

"SIR,—It is a great while since I have troubled you with either thanks for the favours you have done me, or with any solicitations. The first, I believe you do not care for, and I know you have so much business that I was willing to delay as long as I could giving Mr. Pelham or you any trouble concerning Windsor Park. . . . You will oblige me extremely if you will direct me in what manner to proceed . . . since the Queen stopped the allowance I have been at great expense. . . . But I think by your advice this matter may be settled better, and that the Treasury will either comply with my grant, or allow me to send the Bills of what is paid upon his Majesty's account. If they think anybody will do it honester or cheaper than I have done, I shall be very glad to quit the allowance, and I would have quitted the Park long ago if I had not laid out a very great sum in Building in the great Park, and likewise in the little park where John Spencer lives. . . . The Keepers send me word that it has been so bad a season this year that I must buy a great deal of hay for the Deer or they will be starved this winter. For

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Queen Caroline.    <sup>2</sup> The MSS. in the British Museum.



though 'tis a great park, it is full of roads, and there is nothing beautiful in it but clumps of trees, which, if Mr. Pelham does not prevent it, will be destroyed by the Cheats of Surveyors, which in a great measure I have prevented for more than forty years.

"Pray forgive me this long trouble, and be assured that you never obliged anybody in your life that is more sincerely, though I am insignificant, your friend," &c.

To the above long letter, repetitions in which have been omitted, Mr. Scrope answers as follows :—

*"13th September 1744."*

"I had the honour of your Grace's letter, which I showed this morning to Mr. Pelham, who was pleased to go through the whole of your affairs in the justest manner you could wish, and expressed a great desire to show the regard and honour he had for your Grace; and if you will be pleased to forget what is past, and will be contented with having justice done you for the future, there will be no difficulty in obtaining it, and this, I fear, is the utmost that can be done in the miserable condition that Mr. Pelham found the Treasury.

"I hope your Grace will excuse the freedom with which I write, and that you will pardon my observing by the latter part of your letter that even the Great Duchess of Marlborough is not always exempted from the vapours. How your Grace could think yourself insignificant, I can't imagine. You can despise your enemies (if any such you have); you can laugh at fools, who have authority only in their own imagination, and your Grace hath not only the power, but a pleasure in doing good to every one who is honoured with your friendship or compassion. Who can be more significant! This will make your Grace always esteemed and

a history of between thirty and forty years finished. I shall be contented when I have done all in my power, whenever the stroke comes. I only pray that it may not be very painful, knowing that everybody must die ; but I think whatever the next world is, it must be better than this, at least to those that never did deceive any mortal. . . . I send you two copies of a paper, which is all I have done yet with my historians. I have loads of papers in all my houses that I will gather together to inform them, and I am sure you will think that never any two men deserved so well from their country as the Duke of Marlborough and my Lord Godolphin."

Pope is reported to have said, "The Duchess of Marlborough has a large and very material collection of papers ; but I fear she burns such as will not make for those she loved." Some years before, in 1716, she had begun compiling the duke's memoirs, but probably found the undertaking beyond her power.

The Duchess of Marlborough left the sum of £500 to the two historians, Richard Glover and David Mallet, who were also to benefit by the publication. They were not, however, equal to the work. One shortly retired from the commission, and the other began, but only half completed his task.

In 1842, at Hensington, near Woodstock, a house formerly occupied by the steward, eighteen folio books bound in vellum were found, containing copies of despatches and letters of John, Duke of Marlborough, from 1702-12, "being the same into which the letters were transcribed at the time of the originals being despatched." These were not known to Archdeacon Cox, but were published in 1845, edited by General Sir George Murray. How the papers got separated, and whether the steward had received orders to bring these folios to Marlborough House, and had them conveyed

to his own residence until an opportunity occurred for forwarding them, must be a matter of conjecture. Probably the duchess died before she could collect all the papers from the various houses.

Sarah Duchess paid the penalty of old age by surviving nearly all her friends, but was more unfortunate than most by surviving so many of her children and even grandchildren, and those the most dear to her. She had lost her only son, the Marquis of Blandford, as we have seen, at an early and promising age; then her two best friends, Sidney, Earl of Godolphin, and Mr. Maynwaring; then the beautiful Duchess of Bridgewater, to be followed a few years later by her favourite daughter, the amiable and charming Lady Sunderland.

After the great and irreparable loss of her husband, the great duke, came the death of her son-in-law, Lord Sunderland—with whom she may have had differences, but whom she greatly esteemed—and his eldest son, Robert, whom the duchess loved. Probably Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, was the least regretted by Sarah, but it would be unnatural to suppose she did not feel her loss, as in spite of their quarrels Sarah had given her a lodge in Windsor Park, close to their own abode.

Next to the death of her husband and her favourite daughter, there is no doubt that her bitterest sorrow was the loss of her beloved grandchild, Diana, Duchess of Bedford, who died about the age of twenty-eight. So when the duchess is accused in her old age of quarrelling with all her relations, it should be recollected that the most amiable members of her family and those she loved with the deepest affection had long been taken from her.

Sarah had three faithful dogs of whom she was very

fond, as they possessed those virtues she found wanting in human beings.

Lady Mary Wortley Montague and her daughter, Lady Bute, frequently visited the Duchess of Marlborough in her later days, sitting with her while she dined and listening to her conversation. They got on very well with her, showing her sympathy and interest.

Although her health had been for long very indifferent, from frequent attacks of gout, her mind remained clear to the last. The end came suddenly in October 1744. Sarah lay ill even unto death, and she knew the summons had come at last. The end of her long life was drawing to a close, her indomitable spirit would soon be at rest. Her favourite grandson, Jack Spencer, was summoned from Althorpe, but he arrived too late to see her alive, for she passed peacefully away on the morning of the 19th of the month, surrounded only by her weeping domestics, who lost a generous and kind mistress, to whom they were all devoted.

With her mortal body so full of aches and pains she put off her failings, her errors, and her weaknesses, even as the husk falls off the wheat, leaving the pure seed behind, and it was sound grain, not rotten or corrupt. The patriotic, generous, and vigorous mind still lives and will always live in the memory of her countrymen, though her restless spirit and mortal body are at peace.

There is little to record of the Duchess of Marlborough's funeral; it was as she had wished, of the most private character. The newspapers of the day give short notices only of her death. They however give long abstracts of her will;<sup>1</sup> not one of her servants was forgotten, even to her two chairmen, who each received a pension of £20 a year.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix X.

On Sunday, October 21, the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough arrived with a grand retinue at their house in Piccadilly.

In a few days orders were given for the vault in Henry VII.'s chapel to be opened, at the instance of Lord Godolphin, for the removal of the Duke of Marlborough's body, which was conveyed to Woodstock on Monday, October 29; that of the duchess left Marlborough House the following day. The two were laid side by side in the chapel at Blenheim. On the day the Duchess of Marlborough died an old man at St. Albans named Halfey, a bailiff, breathed his last. "He had been often heard to say that he wished he might die when the Duchess of Marlborough died, and as near as it could be calculated it was at the very hour."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Advertiser*, 31st October 1744.





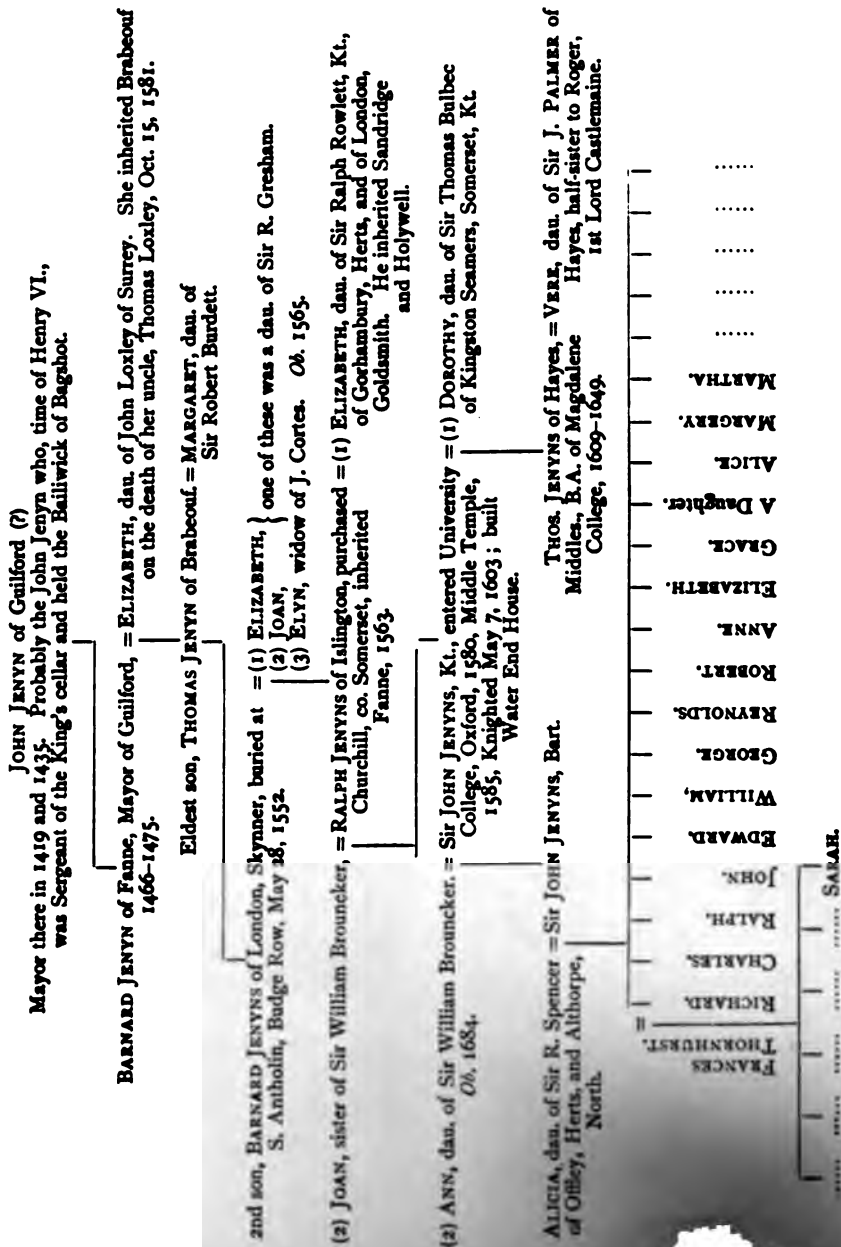


## APPENDIX





## APPENDIX I

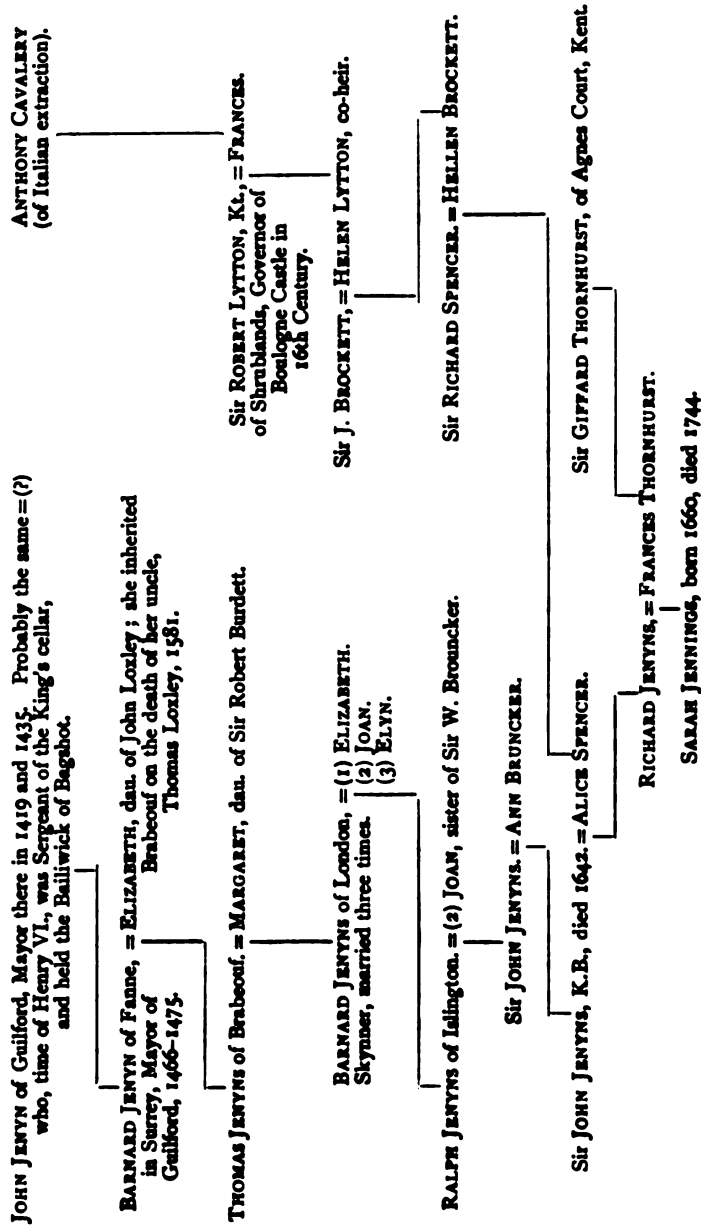




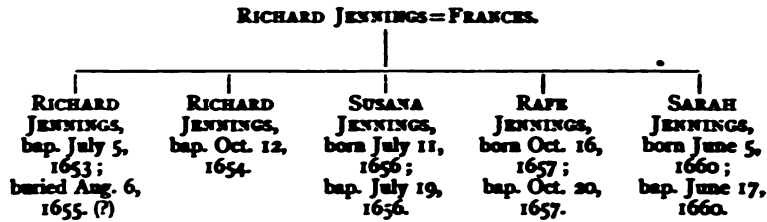


## SARAH DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH'S PEDIGREE

Going back two hundred years, showing remote Italian Extraction. (A new discovery.)



A COPY OF ST. ALBANS' ABBEY REGISTER, SHOWING  
DATE OF SARAH'S BIRTH.<sup>1</sup>



## APPENDIX II

### SHORT TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF THE JENNINGS FAMILY.<sup>2</sup>

It appears there were two distinct families named Jennings. The branch from which Sarah Duchess of Marlborough sprang can, after careful research, be traced to John Jennings, Mayor of Guildford in 1419; he was probably the same Jennings who was Sergeant of Henry VI.'s cellar, and held the Bailiwick of Bagshot. He is supposed to have been descended from a Captain of Archers, who came from Genoa in the thirteenth century. In course of time the name became changed from De Janua to Janys, Jannings, Jenyns, Jennings. In 1381 a Mathew Janyns, Goldsmith, advanced money on King Richard II.'s jewels.

Another but totally distinct branch of Jennings is descended from a Danish captain who accompanied Canute, King of Denmark, to England. He was granted lands near the coast at Harwich, in return for his services to his master's father Sweyne, King of Denmark. A descendant of this Jennings, also a sea captain, brought the body of Richard Cœur de Lion from Palestine, and in commemoration of this event was granted three plummets, or shells, as a coat-of-arms. These Jennings took no prominent part either in public life or at court until the reign of Henry VIII., when one Robert Jennings was employed in the royal household. He became a favourite with the King, who gave him a sword and belt, and about the year 1545 appointed

<sup>1</sup> See p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 228.

him chief ranger and deer-stalker in the parish of Duffield, Derbyshire; he then lived at Shottle.

To this branch belong the families descended from Robert of Shottle, John of Birmingham, and Philip of Duddlestone, who was the father of Admiral Sir John Jennings or Jennens, well known in the days of Queen Anne; also Robert Jennens, Sarah's correspondent, who was about the court; and his son, the famous William Jennens, who died intestate, and for whose property there were many claimants—*Jarndyce v. Jarndyce*, in "Bleak House," being founded on this case.

Most of the above information has been obtained through the kindness of Mr. Thomas Perry, F.C.S., whose forthcoming work on "Schemes of Descent" shows the study of a lifetime.

### APPENDIX III

LADY RUTLAND TO HER HUSBAND, AFTERWARDS DUKE,  
DESCRIBING HER RECEPTION BY WILLIAM III. AT  
KENSINGTON.<sup>1</sup>

"1701, April, Thursday night.

"I was last night at Kensington, my dear Lord, altho' my cold yett is farr from being gone, and I received so great honour from his Majesty, who it is said is observed to *not* talk much to ladys, that I cannot miss acquainting you with it, who was extremely concerned in both conferences his Majesty and I had. As soon as he came out into the Gallery from his own apartment he found a crowd of company of both sexes, and the Dutches of Somerset, Ormond, Queensborough, and myself talking together just by a card table and his chaire, so he made his legs to all the ladys, and everyone that played took their stools, which was the three Dutches I have named. Lady Arlington, Lady Barramore, Lord Feversham, Lord Rumney, Lord Albermall, and Mr. Boucher that dealt, and the King called to me and told me, he did not ask me now to play because I refused it before, but asked if I never played at that or no other game at card. I told him I had played at Basset when the Queen was alive and commanded me, and it was a silver tabel, but a gold one was to[o] deep for the ill luck I generally had. Then he asked me how you had your health, and he hard [you] had not injoyed it extrem well, which he was sorry for. So I was forced to draw nearer his

<sup>1</sup> See p. 123.

chair and stand between the Dutches of Somerset's stooll and it, and told the King that indeed you had bine so often ill that you had never stirred from home these severall years, which was the reason you could not pay your duty to him, as you would else have done. He said he thought Bellvoyr (Belvoir) seemed to suit not only very finely but healthfully, and asked if you had no thought of coming to it againe (the Earl of Rutland was then at Haddon Hall). So I said I hard you had, and thus the first conference ended, and after playing a little at the gold tabel, as he allways does, so I gave back to make the King's way, and pressed the lady behind to do so to, which the King seeing, said it was "no matter my Lady Rutland, for I can come over the stool," so strid over it, and when [he] came just by me stopped and told [me] I looked mighty well, and that since he could not see you, which he should have bine very glad to have done, he was mightly pleased to see me, and asked how long I had bine in Town, and told me I was so great a stranger he hoped I would not leave them as he termed it quickly.

"I told the King I did not know whether I should have had or no that honour and good fortune I then had of speaking to him myself, but that if [I] had I had your particular command to give him your humble duty, and assure him he had no subject whatsoever had more duty for him, and was more devoted to his intrest, and prayed more for his prosperity and long life, than yourself; and that you had sent your two sons to do him the service they could, and testifie the sinceritty of yours and ther loyalty, as I hoped they did so.

"Upon which he told me he was extremly satisfied with it and took it very kindly all I had told him, and since I had done that, desiered I would take the trobel upon me to give you back his thanks when I writ, and return you his complements, which was his own words. While all this passed between us, I could hear a world of the crowd which knew me not, ask 'Who is she? What is she? that the King takes such notice of, looks so pleased all the while he talks to?' and abundance that did not know me asked [me] what his Majesty and I could find to talk of so long. I told them it was fine speeches of civility on both sides, and several spoak also to Dolly of it, who went with me to Kensington and was very fine. She said it was observed by all that the King looked brighter and pleasanter when he was doing me that honour amongst so much company than had bine seen to do for sum time."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The above account of court life is a curious specimen of the spelling and phrasing then in vogue.

## APPENDIX IV

WOODSTOCK MANOR<sup>1</sup>

During the great rebellion, the old palace was besieged and much damaged. Cromwell afterwards portioned it out to three persons, two of whom pulled theirs down and sold the stones. The third's share consisted of the Gatehouse and other ruined buildings. Later, the Gatehouse was converted into a dwelling by Lord Lovelace, who occupied it for years. Among the ruins was a fine porch, outlines of a hall, and a few of the beautiful windows of the ancient chapel. Several turrets also remained.<sup>2</sup>

## APPENDIX V

SONG COMPOSED BY FRENCH SOLDIER AFTER BATTLE OF  
MALPLAQUET, ON RUMOUR OF MARLBOROUGH'S DEATH<sup>3</sup>

After the battle of Malplaquet a rumour was circulated that Marlborough had been killed. This reaching the ears of the French camp, one of the soldiers composed a parody of an ancient war-song, well known in Algiers and Spain. He entitled it "Malbrook s'en va en guerre." It runs as follows:—

Malbrook s'en va t'en guerre,  
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine !  
Malbrook s'en va t'en guerre  
Qui sais quand reviendra !

Il reviendra à Paques  
Ou à la Trinité !  
La Trinité se passe  
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine.

La Trinité se passe  
Malbrooke ne revient pas !  
Madame à sa tour monte  
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine.

Madame à sa tour monte  
Si haut qu'elle peut monter  
Elle voit de loin son page  
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 147.<sup>2</sup> Skelton's "Antiquities of Oxfordshire.<sup>3</sup> See p. 201.



## APPENDIX

Elle voit venir son page  
 Tout de noir habillé  
 Mon page, mon beau page !  
 Mironton, mironton, mirontaine.

Mon page, mon beau page  
 Quelle nouvelle apporte  
 Aux nouvelles que j'apporte  
 Mironton, mironton, mirontaine.

Aux nouvelles que j'apporte  
 Vos beaux yeux vont pleurer  
 Quitter vos habits rose  
 Mironton, mironton, mirontaine.

Quittez vos habits roses  
 Et vos satins broches !  
 Le Sieur Malbrook est mort  
 Est mort,—et enterré !

## APPENDIX VI

CURIOUS DIALOGUE ABOUT THE DUCHESS'S CHARACTER,  
 BY MR. MAYNWARING <sup>1</sup>

There is a curious dialogue among Cox's MSS. at the British Museum, endorsed by him "Written in the hand of Mr. Maynwaring." Although somewhat flattering and overdrawn, it throws some light on Sarah's character, as seen by this particular friend at any rate. (Repetitions are omitted.)

After a few questions and answers of no importance, it reads:—

B. O. "Our Queen at the beginning of her reign and several years before had fixed her Inclination on a certain Lady of very clear Judgement and understanding, as well as lively imagination, one that was extremely impartial and entirely true (free) from Prejudice, that could see the Errors and weaknesses as well as the Vertues of Enemies, of whose Sincerity it may be said, as it was of Cato's vertue, that She was sincere because she could not be otherwise, one that could neither flatter for Interest nor use artifice for self defence, that could not conceal or dissemble her real sentiments or avoid some warmth on the side of Truth, for

<sup>1</sup> See p. 219.

so mean an End as to please or be well spoke of by those that differed from her . . . one that was not only above all double-ness but also all sort of vanity and Affectation, one that was put into a Court very young, where Vice and Folly had all marks of Honour and Approbation; and though she had as much if not more wit and beauty than any of those, whose unhappy Conduct made their names more remarkable, yet she had so sincere and natural a modesty that it . . . set her above those dangerous gallantries that were so modish.

"One that was so far from valueing . . . those gifts of nature that she did not seem to know she had them. And the innocence . . . of her behaviour restrained all that was Criminal in others and left no Passion but Admiration and respect, which is the perfect character of true Vertue. Such was the person that at this time enjoyed the Queen's favour, which was not the effect of Hot Design or Flattery; she did nothing to procure it but the serving her Mistress with more truth and Zeal than favourites generally practise . . . if ever any Lady had a great claim to a great Genius it was she. For without any advantage of Education she grew up to be not only the best Œconomist in her family, but the most perfect pattern of Morality. . . ."

P. G. "You give a very high character of this Lady."

B. O. "'Tis so true that all who are acquainted with her would know the picture. But the good effects of her favour are still to be mentioned, and the first is that it led the Queen to place her whole trust in the two Ablest men in her Kingdom, one this Lady's Husband, the other closely united to him in the Strictest Friendship and Alliance. . . ."

(Not finished in the original.)

It is a pity this dialogue was never completed. Mr. Maynwaring probably drew it up with a view to the duchess's vindication, but died before accomplishing the task.

## APPENDIX VII

### *To PRINCE EUGENE OF SAVOY*<sup>1</sup>

"MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, *June 26, 1735.*

"SIR,—Mr. Hugentt, the Gentleman who will have the honour to Deliver You this Letter, having a Design to serve as a Volunteer in his Imperiall Majty's Army under Your Highnes' Command, hath desired me to recommend him to Your Countenance

<sup>1</sup> See p. 228, *note*.

and protection, that he may be provided for in Such manner as Your Highness may Judge his Merits and Services May Intitle him to.

"As he is a Gentleman of a Good Family, many of his relations who are my Friends, have (interested) me on his behalf, and I was the rather Inclined to Comply with their desires herein, as I thought it a Laudable Ambition in the Gen<sup>l</sup>. to learn the Art of Warr from the Greatest Generall this Age hath produced; And this I may say without Any Suspicion of Flattery, having heard this Character of Your Hignes: From my Late Dr Lord, who was esteemed in some degree A judge of those Matters. This Gentleman By Being a Roman Catholic is not Capable of Any Employment in His Britannic Majty's Troops: But Since he difers from us in Religious Sentiments, I am pleased that he take that partt in the presentt warr, which I think the most favourable to our Civil Liberties. I own I am strongly prejudiced to think so; Because Your Highness is engaged on thatt Side; the Glory of whose Life hath been to have spentt it Equally in the Defence of the Christian Religion and the Civill Liberties of Europe. But I perceive the pleasure I have from renewing in this manner my Acquaintance with Your H<sup>ch</sup>. will draw me in Before I am aware to Expatiate too much upon the Greatt Qualities I esteem In You; which will be mispending So much of Yr. time, From which All Europe at present Expects greatt Advantages, give me leave therefore without taking up any more of itt, to Assure you that I am with the greatest Esteem and Respectt,

"Yr. Highness,

"most obedientt, most humble Srv<sup>ts</sup>.",

"SARAH MARLBOROUGH."

"TO HIS HIGHNESS

"PRINCE EUGENE of Savoy."

## APPENDIX VIII

ANTHEM PERFORMED AT THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH'S  
FUNERAL.<sup>1</sup> SET TO MUSIC BY BUONONCINI<sup>2</sup>*Chorus.*

"Howl, O ye fir trees, for the Cedar is fallen!"

"When Saul was King over us, thou wast he that leddest out, and  
broughtest in Israel."

"The Lord then said to thee, Thou shalt be Captain over Israel,  
and you shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by  
the Sword."

*Duet.*

"How are the Mighty fallen, the weapons perished of War."

*Recitative.*

"How doth the City solitary sit, she that was Great among the  
Nations, and the Princess of the Provinces."

*Air.*

"All the night she weepeth sore, and her tears are on her cheeks.  
Howl, O ye fir trees, for the Cedar is fallen."

## APPENDIX IX

LIST OF ESTATES THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH BOUGHT  
(THIRTY IN ALL).<sup>3</sup>

Date of Purchase.	Where Situated.
1723 . . .	. Wimbledon, Manor of —, a copyhold.
1725 and 1726 . . .	. Chilworth, " —, in Surrey.
1725, Nov. 26 . . .	. Payham, " from Sir Leith Bishopp, paid £6540.
1726, Oct. . . .	. Goshurst, Manor of Shortland, sold under Act of Parliament, about 533 acres, price £13,670.
1727 . . . .	. Marston, in Warwickshire.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 280.<sup>2</sup> From a MS. in British Museum.<sup>3</sup> See p. 289.

[The page contains approximately 15 lines of text that are almost entirely illegible due to extreme blurring and horizontal streaking. The text appears to be a list or a series of entries, but the specific details cannot be discerned.]



## APPENDIX X

ABSTRACTS FROM THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH'S  
WILL<sup>1</sup>

One gathers several particulars of her household from the Duchess of Marlborough's Will, all her servants, including her two chairmen, were remembered by her.

The establishment consisted of housekeeper, butler, porter, three footmen, and a groom of the chambers, a coachman and two chairmen, two housemaids, a laundry-maid and her two personal attendants, one of whom had been with her daughter, Lady Sunderland. Fifteen servants in all.

In her Will, dated 11th August 1744, she desired to be buried at Blenheim, near the body of her husband. She directed that the funeral should be as simple as possible, no unnecessary expense to be incurred, only the servants who attended were to be given mourning. The sum of £300 to be distributed among the poor at Woodstock to mark the occasion.

Her estates in twelve counties were left in trust to John Spencer, and his son, her great grandson,<sup>2</sup> was to receive an annuity of £2000 as a charge on the property; and to his wife, if he should live to be married, the duchess left her diamond pendants and all jewels not otherwise disposed of.

Marlborough House was left to John Spencer for life; afterwards it was to go with the title. The contents of Holywell went with the house to John Spencer, as also the furniture at Windsor Lodge and property in Grosvenor Street.

All the furniture at Blenheim was left to the Duke of Marlborough, on condition nothing was removed from Althorpe.

The Duchess desired that Mr. Richard Glover and Mr. David Mallet should have access to all necessary papers for the history they were to write of the duke. She believed Mr. Glover to be a very honest man, and that he had the welfare of England at heart. Her Grace was particularly anxious it should be pointed out in the history that the Duke wished justice to all mankind, and that he left King James with great regret; "and if he had been like the *patriots of the present time*, he might have been *all* an ambitious man could have hoped for by assisting King James to settle popery in England."

The duchess also says, "that she should be extremely obliged

<sup>1</sup> See p. 354.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards the first Earl Spencer.

to the Earl of Chesterfield, who never had any call to give himself any trouble about her, if he would direct the two persons above mentioned, who are to write the history, which she is extremely desirous should be done well."

She requests there will be no verse, and before being printed it is to have the approval of the Earl of Chesterfield, and all her executors, or the greater number of those that are living. Five hundred pounds is left to each of the historians, who may profit by its publication.

#### SOME FURTHER LEGACIES

To Thomas, Duke of Leeds, her estate near St. Albans, and a freehold at Romney Marsh, Kent, and £3000.

To her granddaughter Mary, Duchess of Leeds, her diamond solitaire with the large brilliant it hangs to, also the picture in water-colour of the late Duke of Marlborough, drawn by Lens.

To the Duchess of Montague, her gold snuff-box, that has in it two pictures of the late duke, also the miniature of her father covered with a large diamond, and two enamelled pictures of her sisters, Sunderland and Bridgewater.

To Juliana, Countess of Burlington, her bag of gold medals, and "£1000 to buy a ring, or something of me."

To the Duchess of Devonshire, her box of travelling plate.

To her niece, Lady Dillon, £1000.

To Philip, Earl of Chesterfield, "out of the great regard I have for his merit and the infinite obligations I have received from him, my best and largest brilliant diamond ring and £20,000. Also she left him manors in Northampton and Surrey, and the reversion of her Wimbledon estate.

To the Earl of Clancarty, £1000 down and £1000 a year; also a manor, &c., in Buckinghamshire.

To William Pitt, Esq., £10,000, "upon account of his merit in the noble defence he made for the support of the laws of England and to prevent the ruin of his country." Also she bequeathed him a manor in Buckinghamshire, late the estate of Richard Hampden, Esq., and other lands in Suffolk and in Northampton.

To Hugh, Earl of Marchmont, a manor, late the estate of Sir John Witteronge, Bart., and another, late of the estate of Sir Thomas Tyrrel, both in Buckinghamshire.

To — Bishop, Esq., her godson(?) a manor in Oxford, with the contents.

To Thomas, Lord Bishop of Oxford, property in Bedford.

To Dr. James Stephens, £300 a year and estates in Berks and Huntingdon, and above this the sum of £1300, "as a further compensation for the great trouble he will have as my acting executor."

To Mr. Burroughs, Master of Chancery, £200 to buy a ring.  
To each executor, £500.

To Beversham Filmer, Esq., manors in Leicester and Northampton, late belonging to Sir Thomas Cave.

To Mrs. Jane Patterson, the striking watch that had formerly belonged to her mistress, Lady Sunderland, and £130 a year.

To Grace Ridley, her first woman, £15,000 and £300 a year, and to the daughter, Anne Ridley, the sum of £3000. Her Grace also bequeathed to Grace Ridley two pictures of the late duke, and her own striking watch, which had belonged to the duke. Also a portrait of herself, by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

To the housekeeper, Elizabeth Arbor, £200 yearly, and a year's wages.

To the butler, John Griffiths, likewise.

To the head housemaid, Anna Clarke, the same.

To the groom of the chambers, Jeremiah Lewis, £50 and a year's wages.

To the coachman, John Dorset, ditto.

To Anne Patten, £130 yearly and a year's wages.

To Olive Lofft, £40

To the porter, Walter Jones, £30 "per annum."

To each chairman, £45.

To each footman, at the time of her death, the yearly sum of £10.

To Margaret and Catherine Garmes, the under-house and laundry maids, ditto, with a year's wages.

The duchess directed that her wearing apparel should be divided into two parts, one half to be given to Grace Ridley, and the other between Mrs. Patterson and Olive Lofft. Any residue of estates or effects not otherwise disposed of to John Spencer and his heirs.

The Will was signed and sealed on August 15, 1744, in the presence of the Earl of Sandwich, Henry Marshall, George Heathcote, and Richard Hoare.

It must have occasioned the duchess much thought to apportion her vast property so that no one should be overlooked. It speaks well for her good sense and generosity, and shows that she was grateful to those who had been attentive to her in her old age.

Mr. Pitt was naturally much gratified at the duchess's

remembrance of him, and acknowledges the legacy in the following letter to Hugh, Earl of Marchmont:—

WILLIAM PITT, Esq., *to* HUGH, Earl of Marchmont.

" BATH, Oct. 22, 1744.

" MY LORD,—Give me leave to return your Lordship my thanks for the obliging manner in which you do me the honor to inform me of the Duchess of Marlborough's great goodness to me. The sort of regard I feel for her memory I leave to your Lordship's heart to suggest to you, besides the many reasons there are for bearing that regard to it. I hope you have likewise some of the same which she has been pleased to honour me with. This and every other thing that can add any advantage to your situation I very truly wish you, and I am, &c., W. PITT."

## APPENDIX XI

### EPITAPH ON THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH

(*Stowe MSS. 180, f. 213.*)

Beneath this monumental Bust,  
Here lies entombed Dame Sarah's Dust,  
Relict of hero John the brave,  
To gainfull Loans and Funds a Slave ;  
'Midst heap of Gold laid up in Store,  
Extreamly rich, Extreamly poore ;  
On whims and various humours bent,  
And yet by fitts Magnificent ;  
Tho' fatt with Royal favours grown,  
Yet no Great Friend to G——'s throne ;  
In former Courts polite and Gay,  
And still a Beauty in Decay.  
Go mourn in Form, yet shed no tears,  
Such falls give life to Happy Heirs,  
Who Can Lament a full Ripe Death,  
When 85 Resigns its breath ;  
So Plumbs in Autumn's fruitfull Crop,  
Mellowed by Time, Corrupt and Drop.  
'Tis Nature's friendly Call, be still,  
Bury the Corps, and prove the will ;  
A Million is a glorious Prize,  
Divide the Spoil, be Great and Wise,

Erect a Monument of Praise,  
The Coin all burial pomps repays ;  
And when the Sacred Tomb contains  
The noble partner's sad Remains,  
Let these few Lines engraved in Verse,  
This memorable Wish rehearse.  
Here Duke and Dutchess Ashes blend,  
O Death ! for once thy Laws Suspend,  
Keep her in thy Cold bed of State,  
'Tis A-La-Mode to Separate.  
Let fighting John return to Life,  
Wee want the Hero, not the Wife ;  
At least let Marlborough's Mighty Shade  
Transfuse his Spirit to a W—de.  
Tho' Dead, his once Victorious Name  
Revives a glorious Blenheim's fame.  
Let British Arms his Steps pursue,  
And learn to conquer and subdue ;  
Let faithless Gauls Old England's Foes  
Receive and fell Malburian Clous,  
Another Blenheim House will Raise  
The Heroes' Military Praise ;  
Vanquish't by none but Cruel Death,  
The Common foe of life and Breath ;  
Let House and Tomb preserve in Fame  
The Bravest Man, the Richest Dame.





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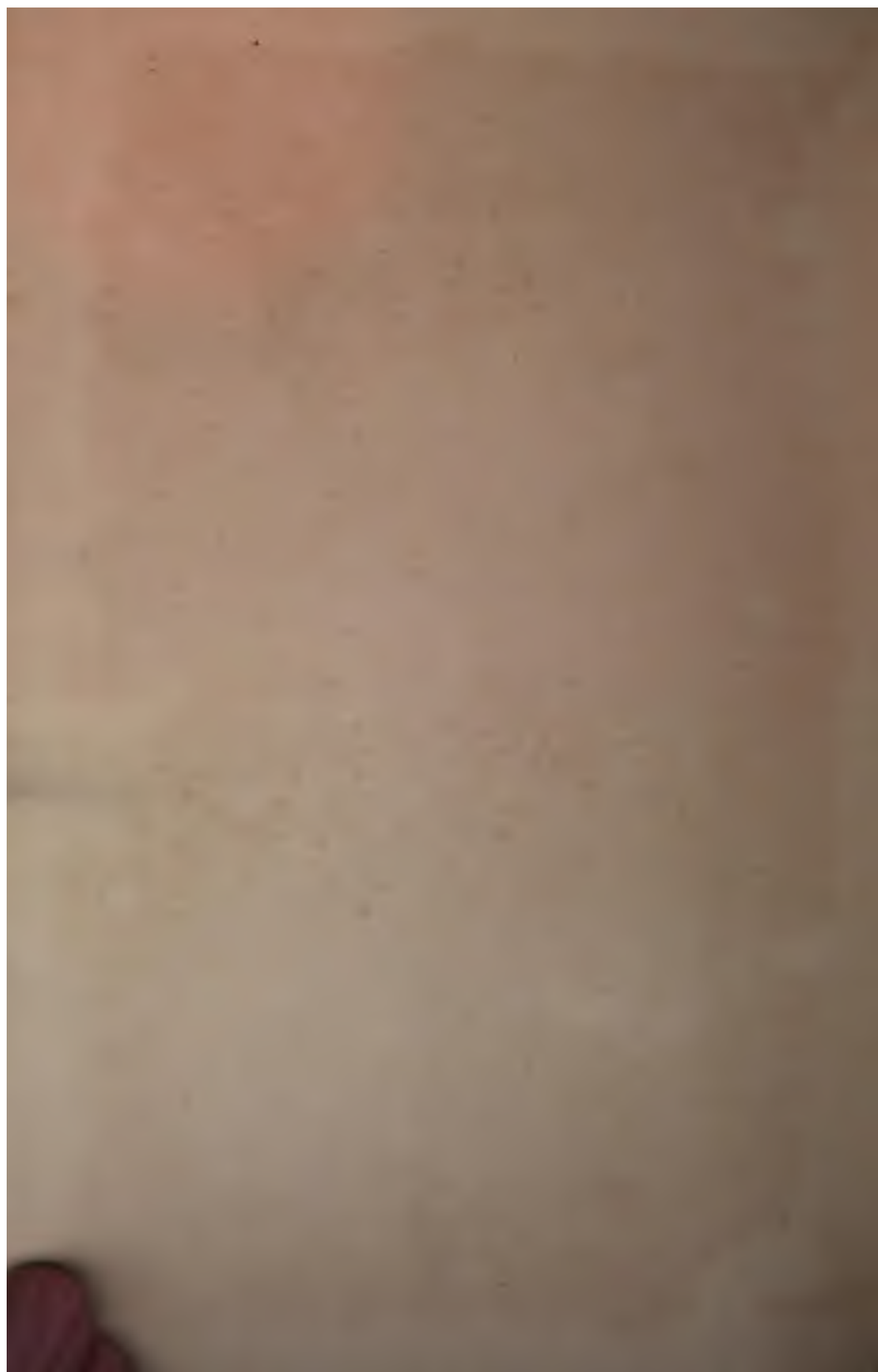
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